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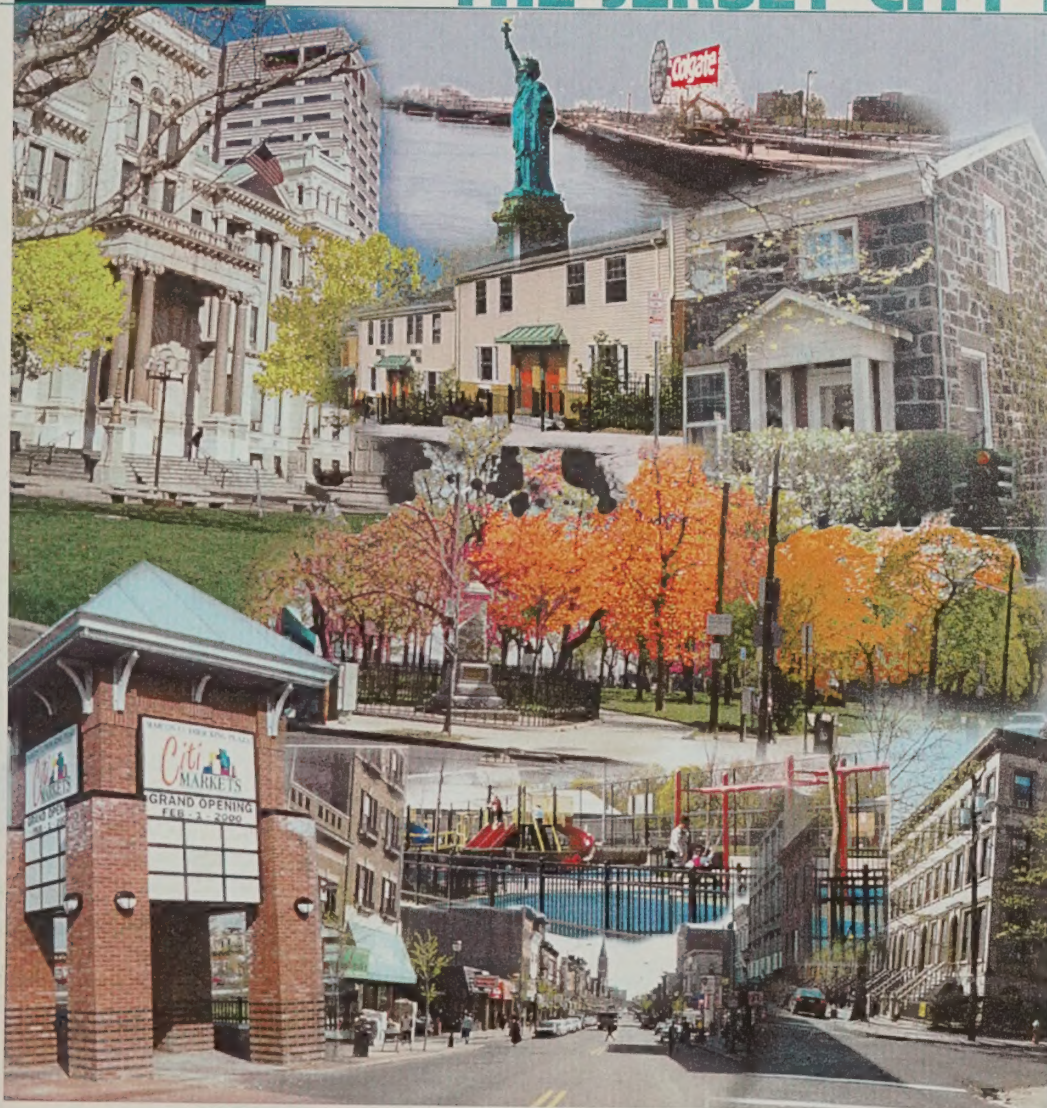
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THE JERSEY CITY MASTER PLAN



Volume 2 of 2

Vision Statement
Urban Design Plan
Strategic Action Plan

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May 2000

"A highly imageable (apparent, legible, or visible) city in this peculiar sense would seem well formed, distinct, remarkable; it would invite the eye and the ear to greater attention and participation. The sensuous grasp upon such surroundings would not merely be simplified, but also extended and deepened. Such a city would be one that could be apprehended over time as a pattern of high continuity with many distinctive parts clearly interconnected."

Kevin Lynch, The Image of the City (MIT Press, 1999), page 10.

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Introduction

The Urban Design Handbook of the Jersey City Master Plan addresses the physical form of the City and suggests development/redevelopment strategies that can influence the quality of the City's urban environment. Guided by a vision of the City as a community of neighborhoods and center of regional, national and global activity, the strategies presented in this handbook address key components of the City's overall physical identity. The components were identified through an urban design analysis of the City, which considered the various overlapping systems that together shape the physical environment. The urban design analysis is summarized in Section 3 of this document and may be reviewed in its entirety in the Existing Conditions and Issues Report (Wallace Roberts & Todd et al, 1999).

1.1 Purpose of the Handbook

As a supplement to The Jersey City Master Plan, this Handbook is its urban design element. Its purpose is to articulate community design principles, establish guidelines for future development within Jersey City and inform the future zoning code update. The handbook is intended to assist municipal agencies, private developers, and the residents in understanding the City's minimum design criteria for development.

The criteria for design established here are not meant to restrict creative solutions that should arise with the design of new developments. The intent is to enhance the City's physical environment, reinforce the community's values, and achieve better design of private and public spaces. Because Jersey City is a dynamic, growing City, it is expected that this document will continue to evolve as the City itself further refines its policies and objectives.

1.2 Urban Design Approach

"Urban design" is the generally accepted term for the art of giving physical design direction to urban growth, conservation and change. It is primarily concerned with the quality of the urban public realm and the making of places for people to enjoy and respect. In this endeavor, urban design is concerned with the social, economic, and political aspects of the environment as well as the physical dimensions of cities.



Figure 1. General view of Jersey City

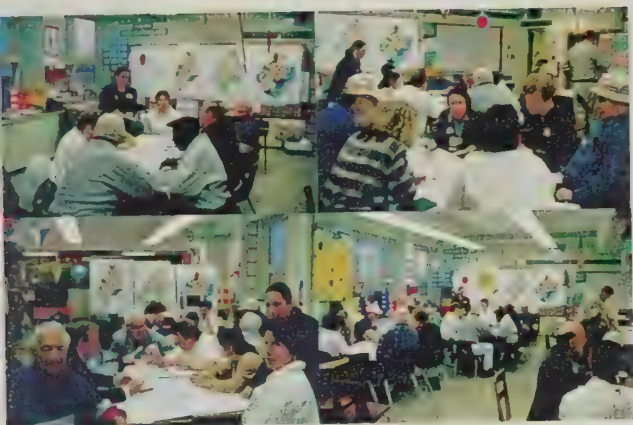


Figure 3. “Ideas Workshops” in each of the City’s six wards

an inventory of baseline information for the Master Plan. Planning Issues were identified from the analysis of existing conditions, review of previous master plans for the City, questions raised at the Master Plan Advisory Committee (MPAC) meetings, and through interviews with the key stakeholders identified by the City. Ideas for the City’s future were compiled through six Ideas Workshops that were held in each of the City’s six wards, the analysis of different case studies, and from past experiences in the City’s development history.

Phase 2: Creating the Vision

In Phase 2, a Vision statement was developed to serve as the basis for preparation of Master Plan recommendations. The vision statement was based on an analysis of Phase 1 documents and ideas generated by the participants of the Ideas Workshops. The vision statement consists of overall goals for future development of the City, a statement of needs, a prioritized list of actions, and key initiatives for realization of the vision.

Phase 3: Preparing the Plan

In this phase, the vision and goals established during Phase 2 of the master planning process were translated into objectives and implementation recommendations for each element of the Plan. The Master Plan has 11 elements including this handbook.

1.4 Organization of the Handbook

The handbook is organized into five Sections.

Section One introduces the handbook, briefly describes the process through which it was prepared, and summarizes its organization.

Section Two analyzes the physical form of Jersey City and its evolution to identify urban design issues to be addressed in the Master Plan.

Section Three discusses the master planning vision for the City and the goals established to guide future development of the City.

Section Four details the basic criteria for future development and enhancements that should be applied in the future.

Section Five, which is also the Strategic Action Plan Element of the Master Plan, describes the strategic initiatives that should follow the Master Plan to advance the process of implementation.

Urban Design Analysis

The Urban Design Analysis of Jersey City provides a framework for understanding how the City developed into its current physical form and how the adopted strategies of growth influenced its shape and character. This analysis evaluates the physical form of Jersey City and identifies urban design issues to be addressed.

2.1 Physical Characteristics and Historical Context

Perched along the Palisades between Newark and New York City, Jersey City's physical image is fragmented, changing dramatically from one area to another. Physically enclosed by two waterfronts, Jersey City exhibits a mix of traditional urban neighborhoods from row houses to detached dwelling streetscapes, suburban style housing and strip commercial development, active industrial areas, high profile tourist amenities and New York City style high-rise structures. A local transportation network reasonably connects these urban features, which are at the same time segregated by a regional system of highways.

Jersey City's key physical features are represented and shaped by two different functional aspects of the City:

- Jersey City is a community of neighborhoods, each of which exhibits distinct physical characteristics, fragmented by the changing topography, the presence of multiple highways and rail lines and conflicting land uses.
- Jersey City is also a regional, national, and global center due to the location of several corresponding activity areas in the City.



Figure 4. Diagrammatic representation of general physical characteristics of the City

Existing Land Use

-  Commercial
-  Institutional
-  Industrial
-  Tourist Attraction
-  Residential
-  Higher Density Residential
-  Open Space
-  Cemetery



Figure 5. Generalized map of existing land uses

2.2 The City as a Community of Neighborhoods

While several regional, national, and global activity areas are concentrated along the Hudson waterfront, the City's predominant land use is residential and is located in a central band that stretches from Bayonne to Union City. These neighborhoods comprise an intense mixture of residential areas and supporting open spaces, institutions, and commercial uses.

The character of these neighborhoods is shaped by the history of the City's formation through consolidation of the separate municipalities of Jersey City, Hudson City (the Heights), Bergen, Van Vorst Township and Greenville. Now divided into six wards - the Heights, Downtown, Journal Square, Bergen/ Lafayette, West Side and Greenville - the City presents an intricate pattern of land uses, housing styles and streets. This complexity derives from problems of integration among the previous municipalities when they became a single entity and the incessant flow of diverse immigrant populations. Together, these two factors have helped shape an eclectic architectonic environment - one that can be described generally but resists any particular classification of housing style that can inform location specific standards for future development.

The elements that define the physical form of Jersey City as a Community of Neighborhoods were identified and described below. These elements are:

- residential areas
- activity districts
- community resources such as institutions, parks, etc.; and
- the community access system



Figure 6. Diagrammatic representation of existing and historical residential area boundaries



Figure 7. Greenville



Figure 8. Greenville



Figure 9. West Side



Figure 10. West Side

2.2.1 Residential Areas

Greenville - Ward A

The Township of Greenville was created in 1863, originally part of the Township of Bergen. Having struggled on for a time as an independent township, financial difficulties over street improvements resulted in its merger in 1873 with the newly formed City of Jersey City.

Single family detached dwellings with off-street parking generally describes Greenville. However, the character of these units varies greatly throughout the Ward, ranging from large 'ranch' style homes on wider-than-average lots to brick attached structures. Analysis of the housing styles in Greenville reveals a pattern of three sub-areas based on topography and two north-south roadways – JFK Boulevard and Ocean Avenue.

The area west of JFK Boulevard contains some of the highest quality homes in Greenville, which utilize the down slope for long views of the neighborhood. Many of these structures are attached brick or vinyl townhouses and some are detached with amenities such as bay windows.

The area between Ocean Avenue and Martin Luther King Drive is comprised of houses that are typically large one or two story structures on wider lots. Between these two areas, in the central portion of Greenville, housing is built in varying forms and styles that contrast to north-south streets like Bergen Avenue and MLK Drive which illustrate more brick, attached structures or apartment buildings.

Urban Design Issues

- Extreme mix of architectural character and styles. While infill units are consistent with the existing housing types in Greenville, their character and detailing are not.
- Greenville is not well connected to the rest of the City.
- Current dimensions of setbacks encourage parking in the front yard.

West Side - Ward B

The West Side neighborhood is centered on the West Side Avenue commercial corridor and includes Lincoln Park, which divides the area into two parts. Immediately around the Park are large single family detached and multi-family structures on streets that are extensively planted with trees.

South of the Park the housing style reflects the general character of Greenville with two and three story homes with vinyl siding and off-street parking. North of the Park, the neighborhood is comprised of a mix



Figure 11. Journal Square



Figure 12. Broadway



Figure 13. Heights



Figure 14. Heights

of rowhouses, one and two family units and multi-family structures similar to the quality and style of those found in Journal Square.

The entire West Side neighborhood is bounded by Route 440, that inhibits access to the Hackensack waterfront. Similarly, Communipaw Avenue, which is a significant gateway to the City and a major commercial corridor, functions as a major physical barrier within the neighborhood.

Urban Design Issues

- Relationship to Communipaw Avenue and Route 440 needs to be addressed.
- Industrial and big-box commercial uses are located within close proximity of residential streets and neighborhood commercial areas.
- Current design does not address the needs of the different residential patterns present in the area, such as multifamilies, and single and two families.

Journal Square - Ward C

The Journal Square neighborhood contains some of the densest residential areas in the city. Housing types vary and include a mix of townhouses, apartments above retail and large apartment buildings. While high densities exist throughout this area, support services such as viable retail and park space are lacking.

The existing traffic pattern in the Journal Square area is chaotic, automobile oriented, to the detriment of the pedestrian environment. Parking is provided on-street with some exceptions. Many of the apartment buildings, particularly around Saint Peter's College, provide limited off-street parking accessed from behind the structures.

Urban Design Issues

- Neighborhood streets are automobile oriented, rather than pedestrian friendly.
- Lack of linkages with retail and open spaces.
- Housing closer to the NJ Turnpike is isolated from the remainder of Journal Square due to topographical boundaries.

Heights - Ward D

The Heights neighborhood is primarily defined by its topographical position and can be divided into three general areas: east slope that encompasses the area overlooking Hoboken and the New York City skyline,



Figure 15. Heights



Figure 16. Downtown



Figure 17. Downtown

western slope that includes the housing west of JFK Boulevard and the central area that is relatively flat.

Central Avenue, the neighborhood's main commercial corridor, is the center of the Heights and one of the City's most viable commercial areas. Between these commercial uses and the amount and quality of its parks, the Heights is an extremely well served portion of the City in regard to support services.

The architecture is typically two and three story, one and two family detached houses although conversions of some houses to multi-family units are evident. The major north-south streets - JFK Boulevard, Bergen Avenue and Central Avenue exhibit different development patterns in the form of attached structures.

Parking has traditionally been handled on-street, however, new developments have followed the zoning ordinance and provided off-street parking in the form of lower level garages accessed from the street.

Urban Design Issues

- New infill units do not reflect the character of the neighborhood.
- Residential and commercial parking is in demand throughout the Heights.
- The Heights, and particularly Central Avenue, is poorly connected to other areas of the City.

Downtown - Ward E

Recent construction along the Hudson waterfront has contributed to an extremely eclectic mix of housing types in Downtown from townhouses, lofts and multi family detached dwellings to high-rise apartments. However, Downtown's identity hinges upon its historic districts of townhouses that are organized around small parks and open spaces. The townhouses typically have no setbacks and are of high quality, replete with extensive detailing representative of their historic role in Jersey City's development.

Downtown's residential areas are tightly bound by water on two sides, the Holland Tunnel on the north and the NJ Turnpike to the west. Typically, the quality of the neighborhood's housing stock and streetscapes decreases closer to the physically obtrusive NJ Turnpike. Developments closer to the waterfront are high-rise structures often intended for a New York City market.

Various types of commercial uses ranging from neighborhood-oriented along Grove Street and Newark Avenue to regionally oriented at Newport Mall serve Downtown. While the districts within Downtown are more pedestrian friendly, new commercial uses along Grand Street are indicative of the reliance on the car for daily errands even within the historic districts. Parking is handled on-street or in parking lots. Some infill units in Paulus Hook, however, incorporate off-street parking with ground floor garages.



Figure 18. Bergen / Lafayette



Figure 19. Bergen / Lafayette



Figure 20. Bergen / Lafayette

Urban Design Issues

- New infill units do not reflect the character of the neighborhood.
- New development along the waterfront is of a vastly different character than that of the historic districts.
- Many barriers remain in Downtown in the form of underutilized land and abandoned rail corridors.

Bergen / Lafayette - Ward F

South of Journal Square, the Bergen / Lafayette residential areas blend into Greenville and Journal Square. Today, this neighborhood exhibits the weakest boundaries of any of the neighborhoods. Containing a mix of housing styles from townhouses and apartments to single family detached dwellings, the neighborhood resists an easy description of its housing characteristics. The brick townhouse areas are of high quality, representative of Downtown residential development, but are underutilized. The commercial areas along McGinley Square, Grand Street, Communipaw, Martin Luther King Drive and Monticello Avenue are mostly deteriorated, exhibit vacancies in the attached structures and a lack of pedestrian amenities.

Bergen is divided into many sections by the remaining industrial uses, topographical changes, and Communipaw Avenue that inhibits easy pedestrian access. Even though Lafayette is directly adjacent to the Liberty Science Center and Liberty State Park, there are no direct connections under the NJ Turnpike. Vacant land separates Bergen and Lafayette areas where a number of new infill housing units have been developed. These units utilize alleyways for parking and exhibit minimal building setbacks, which is in keeping with the surrounding area.

Urban Design Issues

- Streets are in poor condition.
- Bergen Avenue contains a number of vacant units.
- Area exhibits multiple boundaries that frustrate any clear understanding of the neighborhood.
- Commercial areas are in poor condition.
- New infill units do not reflect the character of the neighborhood.



Figure 21. Existing commercial activity areas

2.2.2 Activity Districts

Unlike traditional cities and even other cities in the region, Jersey City today does not have a downtown core which serves as an area of concentrated mixed-use activities to serve the region and its neighborhoods. Instead, a series of smaller areas of activity are scattered throughout the City – some with a neighborhood focus and others with city-wide and regional significance. The presence of smaller, scattered commercial activities is a unique characteristic of Jersey City, which presents opportunities and also challenges for the City. The scattered nature of these activities presents an opportunity to connect them with a highly accessible system of city-wide and neighborhood-specific “districts”. The challenge is to create a level of intensity and activity within each district that will sustain a high level of amenities for businesses and residents alike.

Urban design characteristics and issues of those areas of Jersey City that exhibit the characteristics of an activity district are described below.

Journal Square

Originally developed as Jersey City's downtown, Journal Square is located in the City's geographic center. In recent years, the area has suffered considerable decline, specially when compared with the bursting development of Exchange Place and Newport areas. The resurgence of Journal Square coincides with the revival of smaller, neighborhood-serving commercial areas on Central Avenue, West Side Avenue, Newark Avenue, and portions of MLK Drive.



Figure 22. Journal Square



Figure 23. Exchange Place



Figure 24. Newport

Urban Design Issues

- Journal Square does not have adequate pedestrian connections to the City's neighborhoods and other activity areas.
- PATH transportation center facilities are not well linked to the square in a manner that facilitates easy use of area facilities by commuters.
- Retail activity has deteriorated with a corresponding decline in the streetscape and building facades. Development in the Square does not support intense 24-hour pedestrian activities.
- Various institutional uses that are located in the Square are not well linked.

Exchange Place

With the decline in manufacturing along the waterfront, land overlooking New York City has been available and developed for new commercial uses. This has created new regional activity centers in Exchange Place and Newport that serve a mix of office space, retail and residential uses.

Commercial development in these areas is creating the most pronounced visual impact on the City. Capitalizing on the amenities that the waterfront provides, Exchange Place now contains new offices and some retail.

Urban Design Issues

- Area streets are not attractive and do not provide adequate streetscape amenities for pedestrians and motorists.
- Although anticipated, currently there is no supporting retail activity, hotel and entertainment uses to help create a mixed-use center that is active at all times of the day and evening.
- Area boundaries are not clearly identifiable.

Newport

This area, which is located adjacent to the Holland Tunnel Gateway Plaza, is a mix of high rise buildings and big box retail uses combined with strip mall development, which are sprawling horizontal buildings.

Urban Design Issues

- Physical linkages between Newport and other parts of the City do not adequately connect this area with the rest of Jersey City.

- Area boundaries are not easily identifiable.
- The big box retail structures are unattractive and do not contribute to a pedestrian friendly environment.

Central Avenue

Central Avenue is a local destination for shopping, services, and entertainment for residents of the Heights neighborhood of Jersey City. Commercial activities are generally concentrated in the portion of Central Avenue that has been designated as the Central Avenue Special Improvement District, which is between North Street and Manhattan Avenue. Low-rise commercial buildings, with wide storefronts and mostly office and commercial structures on second floors, characterize this neighborhood-serving commercial corridor. The first floors of several buildings in the corridor have been renovated to suit the needs of commercial activities. Streets have recently been enhanced with decorative pavers, pedestrian lighting, and street trees.



Figure 25. Central Avenue

Urban Design Issues

- Design of off-street parking should be regulated to protect and preserve the pedestrian environment along the corridor.
- Design of commercial signage on buildings is not coordinated.
- Future development within the corridor, particularly the larger retail uses, should be designed to maintain architectural continuity and prevent front yard parking and curb cuts which disrupt the pedestrian environment.

West Side Avenue

Concentrations of commercial retail activity have developed along portions of West Side Avenue. These areas serve residents of adjacent neighborhoods and some visitors that cross the area. Buildings along the corridor are typically characterized by commercial uses on the first floor and office and residential uses on the upper floors. The architectonic features and scale of buildings are consistent throughout the corridor.



Figure 26. West Side Avenue

Urban Design Issues

- Proposals for location of larger, regional commercial facilities in the vicinity may adversely impact the adjacent neighborhoods.
- The existing architectural consistency of buildings should be preserved through site-specific design controls. Signage control should also help improve the attractiveness of the area.

- Main streets are unattractive and not provide amenities for pedestrians and motorists. The existing commercial signage only contributes to the lack of success of these areas.
- Street linkages with adjacent neighborhoods do not provide amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists



Figure 27. Newark Avenue

Newark Avenue

Newark Avenue is a predominantly commercial corridor between Tonnelle Avenue and Christopher Columbus Drive. Businesses located here are in close proximity to the Downtown and Journal Square neighborhoods. A portion of the corridor has developed into a commercial service area for the Asian-Indian community throughout the region, providing mainly ethnic restaurants and retail stores.

Urban Design Issues

- Streets are unattractive and do not provide adequate streetscape amenities for pedestrians as well as motorists.
- Signage on buildings along the corridor is uncoordinated and presents a chaotic image of the corridor.
- Subareas within the corridor are not easily identifiable. There is an opportunity to create community identification with the corridor through streetscape elements and gateways that incorporate elements symbolic of the communities represented.

MLK Drive Corridor

This activity corridor serves the Bergen / Lafayette and Greenville communities. The district's boundaries coincide with the MLK Drive Redevelopment Area and Plan, adopted in 1994 to revitalize the corridor.

Urban Design Issues

- Linkages to neighborhood areas adjacent to the corridor do not provide an adequate level of pedestrian amenity. Streetscapes are in need of lighting, pavement repair, landscaping, and architectural control of infill development to prevent excessive curb cuts and garages.
- The impact of service access to corridor businesses on adjacent residential areas may need to be addressed during neighborhood planning.



Figure 28. MLK Drive



Figure 29. Diagrammatic representation of existing community resources

2.2.3 Community Resources

Jersey City's neighborhoods are currently served by a variety of resources that could be divided among city-wide and neighborhood-serving facilities. The city-wide community facilities include regional parks, hospitals, colleges and universities, emergency services, and the main library. The neighborhood-specific resources include schools, parks and pocket parks, community centers, senior centers, daycare centers, and neighborhood libraries.

Many of the City's community facilities are aging, obsolete and in need of repair. Some are already scheduled for renovation, while others are in need of funding.

Urban Design Issues

- The location of new community resources should be based on a clear definition of the facility as either a city-wide or neighborhood-serving facility.
- Existing community resources should be classified into city-wide or neighborhood-serving categories to guide their design and the nature of linkages to be provided.
- Site design of neighborhood-serving community facilities should emphasize pedestrian and bicycle access.
- Site design of city-wide facilities should emphasize mass transit linkages and connections to other city-wide facilities in Jersey City.



Figure 30. Analysis of existing entrances to Jersey City

2.2.4 Community Access System

Gateways

Important to the imageability of any city is the design quality of its gateways. Gateways to Jersey City exist in a multitude of forms along the highways and rail corridors, none of which fully realize their potential for signaling and celebrating the arrival into the City and the transition from one neighborhood to another.

Regional Transportation Corridors

Jersey City's regional transportation corridors, while a valuable resource, function as barriers within the City, separating the neighborhoods from one another and inhibiting access to commercial and recreational amenities. The Pulaski Skyway, Routes 1&9, Route 440 and the NJ Turnpike create strong barriers throughout the City that are often exacerbated by the vacant land or industrial property that is adjacent to them. These highways separate the City's most valuable public amenity, the waterfronts, from the majority of its residential population. Route 440, a high speed, at-grade roadway, not only separates the Hackensack waterfront from the rest of the City but also divides Lincoln Park into two pieces.

City-Wide Streets

The effect of the City's internal street system on the neighborhoods is also disruptive. City streets lack any discernable hierarchy. Instead, a series of highly traveled and automobile-dominated streets - Montgomery Street, JFK Boulevard, Communipaw Avenue, Grand



Figure 31. Diagrammatic representation of the existing community access network

Street, Newark Avenue and Bergen Avenue - wind residents and visitors through the City. These streets, combined with other highly active streets like Central Avenue and Martin Luther King Drive that take on special importance in particular areas, rarely continue from one end of the City to the other with the same intensity or type of development. The streets lack adequate physical amenities for bicyclists, mass transit, and pedestrians, thus inhibiting residents and visitors from utilizing the City's parks and institutions.

Existing rail lines within the City are often combined with changes in elevation that were created to accommodate them. These remaining active and inactive rail lines also form physical barriers throughout the City.

Urban Design issues

- Corridors form barriers within the City.
- There is no apparent street hierarchy and system of way-finding at both regional and local levels.
- City streets do not offer adequate amenities for pedestrians, bicyclists and mass transit.

2.3 The City as a Regional, National, and Global Center

Shaped by its relationship to New York City and the Hudson River, Jersey City has regional, national, and global importance.



Figure 32. Diagrammatic representation of existing centers of regional economic activity

2.3.1 Regional

Jersey City's development has been greatly affected by its regional importance and its location between two major cities; New York City and Newark. Historically Jersey City facilitated the movement of goods and people between these two cities. Today, the City plays host to a number of engines of the regional economy such as the Exchange Place financial center and commercial activities in the Newport area. Facilities located in these areas provide economic benefits for the City as well as the entire region in the form of tax revenues, employment, and overall economic growth. Formerly occupied by rail yards and other industrial port-related uses, the areas are still undergoing redevelopment and contain tracts of underutilized and/or vacant land.

Urban Design Issues:

- Existing linkages are not adequate to facilitate a mutually beneficial relationship between these areas and the City's neighborhoods and activity districts.
- Regional access roadways adversely impact the physical environment of adjacent City neighborhoods.

2.3.2 National

Jersey City's role as a National Center is the result of existing destinations of national significance such as Liberty State Park, Ellis Island, and the Statue of Liberty. Located on abandoned industrial land on the City's Hudson River waterfront, Liberty State Park is in the



Figure 33. Existing national tourist destinations

process of development.

Urban Design Issues:

- Existing linkages with the City's neighborhoods do not facilitate easy use of these facilities by City residents.
- Visitors to these facilities are not able to easily access the City's existing activity districts, which inhibits local businesses from taking advantage of the City's role as a national center.
- Regional and local entrances to these areas do not contribute towards creation of a positive image for Jersey City.

2.3.3 Global

Although significantly reduced in post-industrial times, Jersey City is host to a number of manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution facilities. The most significant among these is the port in Greenville Yards.



Figure 34. Statue of Liberty and Liberty State Park



Figure 35. Diagrammatic representation of existing industrial land uses

Related to the expanding New York City region, Jersey City exhibits a strong global presence through this port facility. Greenville Yards is a global node for port activities due to its strategic location within the region. While these activities do not significantly add to the tax base of Jersey City or allow for the continuation of waterfront recreational space, they are a valuable amenity for the City's image and to the regional economy as a whole.

Urban Design Issues:

- Neighborhoods adjacent to the port and related facilities are not adequately buffered from adverse visual impact.
- Access roadways and rail corridors are not designed to mitigate adverse physical impact on adjacent neighborhoods.



Figure 36. Greenville Yards

The Vision for Jersey City



Figure 37. Exchange Place

As described in Section 2, the City of Jersey City currently performs two distinct roles - it is a Community of Neighborhoods as well as a Regional, National and Global Center. For purposes of the Master Plan, the vision for Jersey City is to enhance and reinforce the elements of the City that define these two functions so as to enhance the quality of life of the City's residents.

This vision, developed through discussions with members of the Master Plan Advisory Committee, key stakeholders identified by the City, and ideas generated at community forums, is the basis for all elements of the Master Plan. It has three components:

- The vision statement, which is included in section 3.1 below and establishes goals for the future.
- The vision implementation framework, which identifies actions needed to realize the goals and public initiatives to start the process of implementation.
- Physical development concepts for the future development of Jersey City.

3.1 Vision Statement

Jersey City will be a community of neighborhoods that supports a high quality of life for its residents.

Goal 1: Provide unique, attractive, and high quality residential areas that will serve existing residents and attract new residents with a wide range of housing and life-style choices.

Goal 2: Concentrate cultural, entertainment, commercial, and institutional activities for residents and visitors within distinctive and highly accessible citywide and neighborhood-serving activity districts.

Goal 3: Increase availability of community resources for residents through an efficient system of shared citywide resources (such as libraries, hospitals, colleges and universities, recreational facilities, waterfront amenities, police facilities, etc.) and residential area-specific resources (such as schools, community centers, pocket parks, daycare facilities, and senior centers).

Goal 4: Enhance connections between residential areas, activity districts, and community resources in the City through an attractive and pedestrian-friendly community access system incorporating a wide range of mode choices (mass transit, personal automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian).

In addition, Jersey City will also function as a regional, national, and global center.

Goal 5: Continue to develop regional economic engines within the City that support local economic development objectives.

Goal 6: Develop national tourist destinations that support and enhance the City's neighborhoods and activity districts.

Goal 7: Sustain global economic nodes such as the port that support regional economic growth without adversely impacting the quality of life in the City's neighborhoods.

- ① Newport Redevelopment Area
- ② Hudson Exchange Redevelopment Area
- ③ WALDO
- ④ Exchange Place North Redevelopment Area
- ⑤ The Siena
- ⑥ Colgate Redevelopment Area
- ⑦ Fulton's Landing
- ⑧ Liberty Harbor North Redevelopment Area
- ⑨ Grand Jersey Redevelopment Area
- ⑩ Clairmont Redevelopment Area
- ⑪ Caven Point Redevelopment Area
- ⑫ Greenville Yards
- ⑬ Droyer's Pointe
- ⑭ MLK Redevelopment Area
- ⑮ Journal Square
- ⑯ St. Paul's Avenue
- ⑰ Duffield Avenue
- ⑱ Secaucus Road (Jersey City)



Figure 38. Existing development nodes in Jersey City

3.2 Vision Implementation Framework

Based on the analysis of existing conditions and ideas generated by participants at the Ideas Workshops, a framework for implementation of the vision was prepared. It consists of a series of "actions needed" to realize each of the seven goals established in the vision statement and several "initiatives" to start the process of implementation. This framework is documented in the charts on the following pages.

The implementation section also identifies the element of the Master Plan that addresses each of the actions needed. This Handbook addresses those aspects of the vision implementation framework that are associated with the Urban Design Element of the Master Plan.

Vision yields GOALS for the future	Actions Needed yields OBJECTIVES to realize the vision	Initiatives yields steps towards implementation of the vision	Master Plan Element (ELEMENT of the Plan that will address each need)
<div>Community of Neighborhoods</div> <div>Residential Areas</div> <div>GOAL 1: Provide unique, attractive, and high quality residential areas that would serve existing residents and attract new residents with a wide range of housing and lifestyle choices.</div>	1 Achieve better "fit" between infill development and existing environment	Revised Zoning Design Review/Guidelines	Urban Design Land Use
	2 Increase ratio of owner-occupied housing v/s rental housing	Support/Incentives Program	Land Use Housing
	3 Provide areas for student housing near college/university campuses	Revised Zoning Support/Incentives Program	Land Use Housing
	4 Limit commercial	Revised Zoning	Land Use Economic Development
	5 Encourage preservation of neighborhood-serving commercial uses (bakeries, grocery stores)	Revised Zoning Support/Incentives Program	Urban Design Land Use
	6 Enforce density controls (prevent illegal conversion to multi family units)		Land Use Housing
	7 Increase availability of on-street parking spaces for residents	Parking Regulation Streets Investment	Parking Study Circulation
	8 Prevent commuter traffic and parking on residential streets	Parking Regulation Streets Investment	Parking Study Circulation
	9 Require off-street parking for higher density residential developments (5 units or greater)	Revised Zoning Streets Investment	Land Use Circulation
	10 Provide better facilities for safe pedestrian and bicycle access to recreational areas, waterfronts, and adjacent activity districts	Revised Zoning Streets Investment	Circulation Urban Design, Land Use
	11 Foster better neighborhood identification (streetscape, gateways, etc.)	Streets Investment Public Art Program	Urban Design
	12 Reuse vacant buildings and vacant lots	Revised Zoning Support/Incentives Program	Land Use Economic Development
	13 Preserve existing historic buildings/corridors/areas	Revised Zoning Design Review/Guidelines	Historic Preservation Urban Design
	14 Require natural and/or man-made buffers between conflicting land uses	Revised Zoning	Urban Design
	15 Provide more recreational amenities and better access to existing ones	Facilities Investment Streets Investment	Recreation Circulation
	16 Provide better school facilities	Revised Zoning Support/Incentives Program	Community Facilities
	17 Increase availability of middle income housing	Support/Incentives Program	Economic Development
	18 Encourage "greening" of streets and private open spaces (yards) adjacent to streets	Revised Zoning Design Review/Guidelines	Land Use Urban Design

Goals	Objectives	Steps	Elements
<div>Community of Neighborhoods</div> <div>Activity Districts</div> <div> GOAL 2: Concentrate cultural, entertainment, commercial, and institutional activities for residents and visitors within distinctive and highly accessible citywide and neighborhood-serving activity focus districts. </div>	1 Require off-street parking for longer term employees/visitors	Parking Regulation Revised Zoning	Parking Study Land Use
	2 Increase availability of on-street parking spaces for shoppers	Parking Regulation Streets Investment	Parking Study Circulation
	3 Prevent spillover of district-visitor parking into adjacent residential areas	Parking Regulation	Parking Study Circulation
	4 Concentrate complementary activities within district boundaries	Revised Zoning	Land Use
	5 Create a strong visual identity for each district (boundaries, gateways, public art)	Streets Investment Public Art Program	Urban Design Circulation
	6 Reuse vacant buildings and vacant lots	Revised Zoning Support/Incentives Program	Land Use Economic Development
	7 Consistently concentrate activities within district boundaries based on a strong development "theme" for each district	Support/Incentives Program Revised Zoning	Economic Development Land Use
	8 Provide areas for supporting/supported uses around each district (e.g. higher density residential area around Journal Square)	Revised Zoning Support/Incentives Program	Land Use Economic Development
	9 Provide linkages for better access from residential areas and region with wide choice of modes	Streets Investment Regional Access Investment	Circulation
	10 Prevent truck service to businesses through residential areas	Revised Zoning Support/Incentives Program Streets Investment	Circulation Land Use Economic Development
	11 Provide attractive way-finding and informational signage	Streets Investment	Urban Design

Goals	Objectives	Steps	Elements
Community of Neighborhoods Community Resources GOAL 3: Increase availability of community resources for residents through an efficient system of shared city-wide resources and walkable residential area resources.	1 Upgrade existing resources	Facilities Investment Public Art Program	Community Facilities
	2 Provide better access to citywide resources (including waterfronts) from the neighborhoods	Streets Investment	Circulation
	3 Incorporate community-specific elements in facilities to foster greater community identification with resources	Facilities Investment Public Art Program	Urban Design
	4 Provide more community centers, day-care, and recreational facilities	Facilities Investment	Community Facilities
	5 Increase availability of off-street parking and/or mass transit connections to City-wide Facilities	Facilities Investment	Land Use
	6 Require developers to provide appropriately-sized and well situated community facilities on site	Support/Incentives Program Design Review/Guidelines	Economic Development Urban Design
	7 Encourage development of waterfront walkways on both City waterfronts: Newark Bay and Hudson River	Revised Zoning Design Review/Guidelines	Land Use Urban Design
	8 Maintain and preserve the City's existing utility infrastructure	Facilities Investment	Utilities
Community of Neighborhoods Community Access System GOAL 4: Enhance connections between residential areas, activity focus areas, and community resources in the City through an imageable and pedestrian-friendly community access system incorporating a wide range of mode choices (mass transit, personal automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian).	1 Design roadways based on mode emphasis and primary purpose e.g. JFK as City connector, Newark Ave. as Activity District link, etc.	Streets Investment	Circulation Urban Design
	2 Provide better east-west links throughout the City	Streets Investment Transit Investment	Circulation Urban Design
	3 Provide better access over barriers (topography, regional highways, and rail)	Streets Investment	Circulation
	4 Create better mass transit connections within the City	Streets Investment Transit Investment	Circulation Economic Development
	5 Increase efficiency of traffic flow (signals, on-street parking, turning lanes, etc.)	Streets Investment	Circulation
	6 Incorporate visually prominent City identification elements along City roadways (landmarks, gateways)	Streets Investment Public Art Program	Urban Design
	7 Provide signage for wayfinding and information	Streets Investment	Urban Design
	8 Mitigate the impact of truck routes in the City's neighborhoods	Revised Zoning Streets Investment	Circulation Urban Design, Land Use
	9 Maintain and preserve City's existing infrastructure	Streets Investment	Circulation Urban Design

Goals	Objectives	Steps	Elements
Regional, National & Global Center Economic Engines GOAL 5: Continue to develop regional economic engines within the City that support local economic development objectives.	1 Provide more direct access from economic engines (e.g. Exchange Place) to the regional transportation system	Regional Access Investment	Circulation
	2 Clearly define areas for growth of economic activities to minimize adverse impact to the neighborhoods	Revised Zoning	Land Use
	3 Require off-street parking balanced by measures to promote bicycle use, mass transit and attractive landscape	Revised Zoning Parking Regulation	Parking Study Urban Design
	4 Prevent parking spill-over into adjacent residential areas	Parking Regulation Revised Zoning	Parking Study Land Use
	5 Plan for off-site infrastructure investments by developers to support the City's existing infrastructure	Revised Zoning Facilities Investment	Utilities Land Use
Regional, National & Global Center National Tourist Destination GOAL 6: Develop tourist destinations that support the City's neighborhoods and activity districts.	1 Provide strong circulation and visual linkages with the City's Activity Districts	Streets Investment Design Review	Urban Design Circulation
	2 Encourage more activities around existing tourist destinations	Support/Incentives Program	Economic Development Land Use
Regional, National & Global Center Global Node GOAL 7: Sustain global economic nodes such as the port that support regional economic growth without adversely impacting the quality of life in the City's neighborhoods.	1 Support provision of more direct access to the regional transportation system	Regional Access Investment	Circulation
	2 Support provision of better rail service to the port	Regional Access Investment Support/Incentives Program	Circulation Economic Development
	3 Provide for supporting/supported economic activity zone around port	Revised Zoning Support/Incentives Program	Land Use Economic Development
	4 Provide buffers to prevent adverse impact to neighborhoods	Revised Zoning Streets Investment	Urban Design Land Use
	5 Support port-related utility service infrastructure improvements	Support/Incentives Program Facilities Investment	Utilities

3.3 Development Concepts

The third and final component of the vision for Jersey City is a representation of the physical development consequences of the vision statement. Two conceptual diagrams have been prepared to represent the desired physical development of the City as a community of neighborhoods and regional, national, and global center. These diagrams are intended to guide future City land use/zoning, and economic development policies, all of which have been addressed in the respective elements of the Master Plan. Recommendations illustrated in the development concept diagrams are described in Sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 below.

3.3.1 The City as a Community of Neighborhoods

Through an analysis of various development alternatives with the Master Plan Advisory Committee, the following physical development strategies related to each of the four "community of neighborhoods" goals of the vision statement were selected.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The key development issue identified for the City's residential areas is the diversity of the existing building stock and the inadequacy of existing regulations to prevent architecturally incompatible infill construction. Two approaches were considered to address this issue: The first considered creation of architecturally cohesive zoning districts, each of which would have unique building design requirements.



Figure 39. Development Concept: Community of Neighborhoods



Figure 40. Proposed community planning areas concept

The second approach considered establishment of contextual requirements, requiring design of infill construction in the City's neighborhoods to conform to prevailing conditions adjacent to and around the site. In this approach, the City would be divided into several planning areas based on the predominant use and existing physical boundaries within the City.

The latter approach is recommended and four planning areas have been identified:

- East Waterfront (Hudson River)
- West Waterfront (Hackensack River)
- Meadowlands, and
- the Residential Core.

The residential core is further divided into four subareas based on existing boundaries into the

- Northern subarea
- Central subarea
- Eastern subarea, and
- Southern subarea.

ACTIVITY DISTRICTS

The key issues identified for the Activity Districts are low levels of activity in the existing districts, and lack of adequate access from parts of the city not immediately adjacent to the districts. Two approaches were considered to address these issues. The first proposed development of neighborhood-oriented activity districts within each ward. The second approach recommended

development of a traditional system of one or two city-wide activity districts similar to traditional downtowns.

A hybrid of these two approaches is recommended, establishing a two-tier system comprised of both city-wide and neighborhood-serving activity districts to meet the needs of Jersey City residents and visitors.

In this concept, city-wide districts are to be developed with economic and institutional resources that would be accessed by mass transit and/or personal automobile from all parts of the City and region. Neighborhood-specific retail and other neighborhood resources would be focused into the neighborhood-serving districts, which should be primarily accessed on foot and/or bicycle.

The following areas were identified as the Activity Focus Districts in Jersey City:

City-Wide

- Journal Square Area

Neighborhood-Serving

- Central Avenue (between North Street and Manhattan Avenue)
- Newark Avenue (between Tonelle Avenue and Christopher Columbus Drive)
- West Side Avenue (between Montgomery Avenue and Grant Avenue)
- MLK Drive Corridor (between Communipaw Avenue and McAdoo Avenue)

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The key issues identified for Community Resources are the availability and adequacy of resources necessary to maintain a high quality of life in the City and the residents' accessibility to these resources. The first approach considered development of resources within walking distance of each of the City's neighborhoods. The second approach considered the development of a system of city-wide resources with extensive multi-modal connections from the neighborhoods.

A hybrid approach is recommended, providing public library facilities, pocket parks, and other community specific resources within walking distance of the neighborhoods and focusing on improving vehicular and transit access to shared city-wide resources such as recreational facilities.

COMMUNITY ACCESS

The key issues identified for Community Access are integration among existing transportation systems and the efficiency of these systems in providing the full range of mode choices (mass transit, personal automobile, bicycle, and walking) to Jersey City residents and visitors.

Two approaches were considered for developing the City's existing roadway and transit network into a system that could offer the full range of mode choices from the neighborhoods to the Activity Districts and Community Resources in the City. The first approach considered development of north-south and east-west intra-city access arterials on the City's major activity corridors such as MLK Drive and Newark Avenue. The second approach proposed separation of community access from activity districts.

The latter approach is recommended with the following street types to be developed throughout the City:

- A pair of north-south (JFK Boulevard) and east-west (Montgomery Street) "cross-town corridors" -- for efficient vehicular and mass transit access between the City's neighborhoods and shared city-wide activity districts and community resources.
- A system of "greenways" for access to the City's recreational resources via private automobiles, mass transit, and bicycles.
- A system of "neighborhood link streets" for priority pedestrian access to activity districts from the City's neighborhoods.



Figure 41. Development Concept: Regional, National & Global Center

3.3.2 The City as a Regional, National, and Global Center

Similar to the strategies recommended for the community of neighborhoods, the following physical development strategies related to each of the three "regional, national, and global center" goals of the vision statement were selected.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC ENGINES

The key issues identified were access to, from, and among the different economic engines in the City, growth of these areas, and their impact on the city's neighborhoods.

The first approach considered development of regional economic engines in each of the City's neighborhoods. The second approach considered further development of the Exchange Place / Newport and Route 440 areas as the City's preferred location for regional economic activities.

The second approach is recommended with emphasis on connections to and from the City's neighborhoods and mitigation of adverse impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.

NATIONAL TOURIST DESTINATIONS

The key issues identified were community benefit of the national tourist attractions located in the City and community use of these amenities.

The alternative approaches considered were to either develop the Liberty State Park area as a full service

destination, incorporating all commercial amenities needed by visiting tourists or to encourage visiting tourists to utilize the City's existing activity districts. The latter approach is recommended.

GLOBAL NODE

The key issues identified were future expansion of the port and related facilities and the access available to maintain the functionality and importance of that community asset, as well as the impact of access routes on adjacent neighborhoods. The approaches considered were to either create an expansion zone around the existing Greenville Yards facilities or encourage growth through densification within the existing site. The latter approach is recommended.

Urban Design Guidelines

This Section documents urban design recommendations to realize the Master Plan vision for Jersey City. These recommendations are to be implemented in conjunction with those of the other elements of the Master Plan and Parking Study.

Recommendations in this Section start with a set of General Design Criteria, which should be considered as an overlay to the City's Zoning Ordinance used in developing and analyzing proposed projects anywhere in Jersey City. These criteria relate to buildings and site design as well as to areas not directly related to individual buildings such as open spaces, parking areas, and streets.

For building and site design, the general design criteria address:

- Orientation and Site Design
- Facades/rhythm
- Setbacks and yards
- Scale
- Colors and Materials
- Vehicular Access
- Parking
- Signage

For areas not directly related to individual buildings, general design criteria are recommended for:

- Pedestrian and bicycle circulation paths
- Open Spaces





Figure 42. Palisade Avenue



Figure 43. Armory



Figure 44. Communipaw Avenue



Figure 45. Jersey City Medical Center

The general design criteria in Section 4.1 are followed by design guidelines for the physical development of each of the seven elements addressed in the Vision Statement (Section 3.1). The elements are:

Community of Neighborhoods

- Residential Areas
- Activity Districts
- Community Resources
- Community Access System

Regional, National, and Global Center

- Regional Economic Engines
- National Tourist Destinations, and
- The Global Node at Greenville Yards.

4.1 General Design Criteria

Urban design objectives:

- Maintain and enhance the image of the City by improving the architectural design of buildings.
- Improve the attractiveness of streets for pedestrians by controlling the relationship between new buildings and adjacent streets and fostering high quality streetscape design.
- Realize environmentally sensitive design goals by fostering use of sustainable building design and construction practices.

Consistent with the above purpose, specific design criteria are recommended below for the key aspects of building/site design to be considered during the design and/or approval processes. As mentioned before, these criteria overlay the City's zoning and building code requirements.

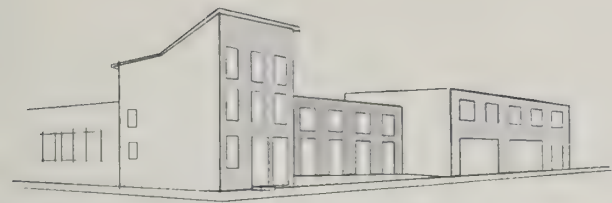


Figure 46. Undesirable facade design

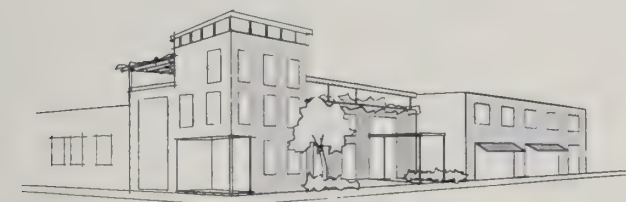


Figure 47. Desirable facade design

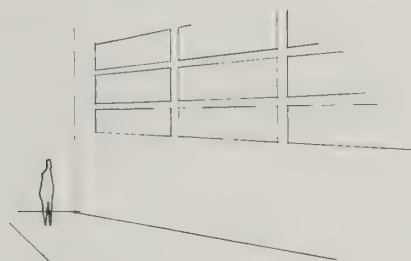


Figure 48. Undesirable facade design

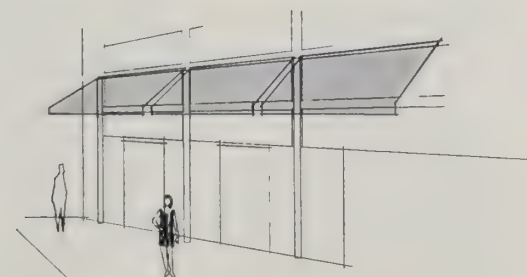


Figure 49. Desirable facade design

4.1.1 Building Orientation and Site Design

- Locate new structures to ensure that their relationship with roads, pedestrian paths and sidewalks is consistent with that of adjacent buildings. (See Figures 54-56)
- Orient building entrances so that they are clearly identifiable and directly accessible from a public sidewalk. This creates activity on the City's streets and opportunity for natural surveillance (defensible spaces) of the public environment.
- On commercial sites, locate a significant portion of the building adjacent to the public street to prevent large gaps in the streetscape.
- Design new buildings to reduce excessive dependence on energy for lighting, heating, and cooling. Some techniques that have been effective are climatically sensitive orientation, shading of walls and windows, and use of energy efficient building materials and mechanical systems.
- In larger new developments that are comprised of multiple buildings, minimize the amount of impervious surface on the site through compact development practices and the use of porous paving materials for parking lots and other paved areas.

4.1.2 Building Facades / Rhythm

- Design building facades to create an attractive streetscape that is conducive to pedestrian activity. Wide blank facades that create a monotonous streetscape are discouraged. (See Figures 48, 49)
- Design facades that are visible from public streets to be consistent with the patterns of fenestration of existing adjacent and predominant structures. Fenestration elements to be considered include columns, windows, doors, as well as the materials utilized in the construction and accessories, such as awnings. (See Figures 46, 47)

4.1.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

- In larger developments that are comprised of more than one building, provide clear separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic to create safer and more attractive environments for pedestrians. Whenever possible, bicycles should use dedicated paths. (See Figures 50, 51)

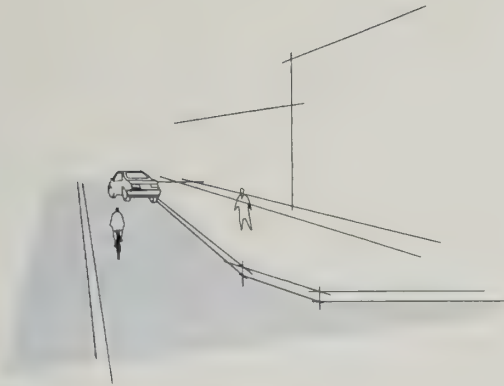


Figure 50. Undesirable Streetscape

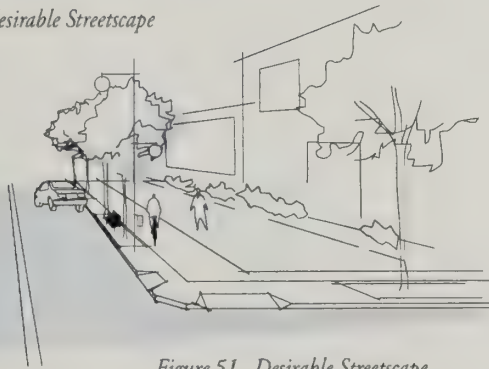


Figure 51. Desirable Streetscape

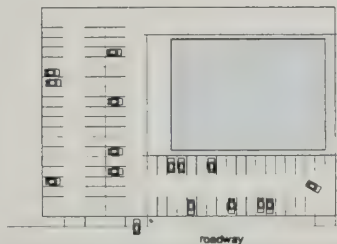


Figure 52. Undesirable parking lot layout

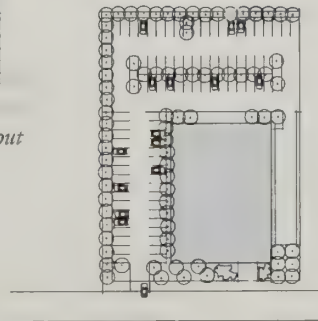


Figure 53. Desirable parking lot layout

- Utilize textured paving to help define pedestrian walkways and crosswalks.
- Provide streetscape elements such as regularly spaced street trees, decorative pavers, pedestrian-scaled lighting fixtures, and way-finding signage on all public sidewalks fronting new infill or substantial rehabilitation projects. Coordinate streetscape design with existing elements in adjacent areas.
- Incorporate provisions for universal accessibility, consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act. (See Figures 50, 51)

4.1.4 Vehicular Access

- Orient buildings to allow for the use of common driveways, thereby reducing the number of curb cuts to enhance the streetscape and to promote traffic safety.
- Locate service access at the rear (or on hidden sides) of buildings with connections to surrounding commercial roads.

4.1.5 Parking

- When a parking lot is required, provide landscaping and visual buffers between the lot and adjacent pedestrian areas.
- When a development requires a large number of parking spaces, provide parking structures instead of large surface lots to minimize the amount of land occupied by parking .
- Screen parking lots with intense landscaping along fences and between parking bays. (See Figures 52, 53)
- Provide adequate lighting in parking lots and parking structures to foster an environment that is perceived to be safe. Minimize glare in adjacent residential areas by providing low height fixtures and/or other lighting design considerations.

4.1.6 Setbacks and Yards

- Follow prevailing patterns of setbacks, building height, and facade design. (See Figures 57, 58)
- Provide attractive landscaping in all yards or open spaces associated with buildings.

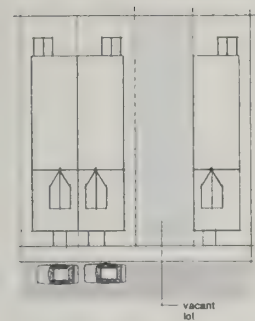


Figure 54. Vacant Lot

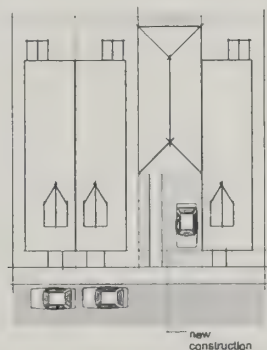


Figure 55. Undesirable Infill

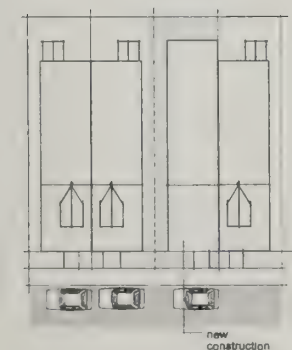


Figure 56. Desirable Infill

4.1.7 Scale

- Scale relationships must be carefully considered and appropriate transitions should be provided where a change of scale is proposed or required. (See Figures 57, 58) Breaking up the mass of buildings, shifting the placement of structures, and stepping the building height help minimize the impact of disruption in the building line.
- When buildings that are inconsistent with their surroundings are proposed, they must be carefully evaluated through a design review process that includes representatives of the community.

4.1.8 Colors and Materials

- The selection of materials and colors for the exterior of buildings requires consideration of the characteristics of neighboring structures. Select colors and materials for compatibility with the site, in an effort to harmonize the area and create a pedestrian-friendly public environment.

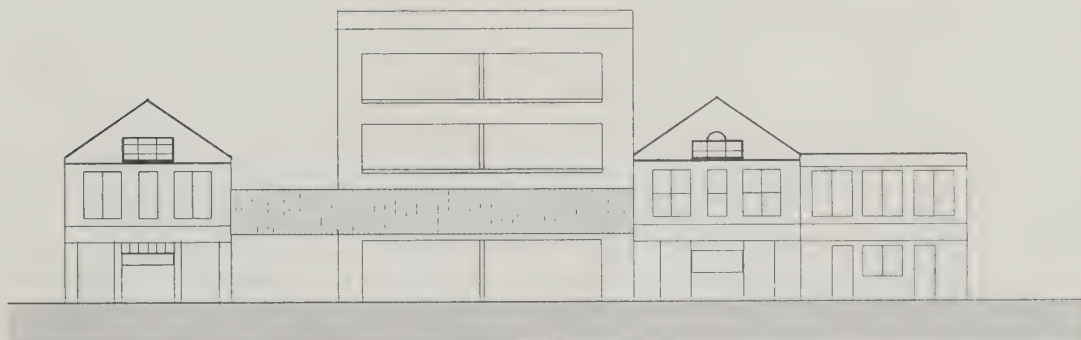


Figure 57. Incompatible infill building scale



Figure 58. Compatible infill building scale

4.1.9 Open Space

- Design public open spaces so that they are easily accessible for residents and well connected to the pedestrian circulation system. (See Figures 59, 60)
- Locate and design recreation areas, plazas, and pocket parks to take advantage of the solar orientation; providing shade during the summer and sunshine during the winter. (See Figure 59)
- Design streetscape elements to enhance the attractiveness and comfort of public areas.
- Provide street furniture that is accessible to all users and suited to the expected intensity of use. Adequate pedestrian amenities help encourage the use of public space.
- Private open spaces should be appropriately maintained by the property owner. Screen mechanical units and garbage collection areas from view. (See Figure 60)

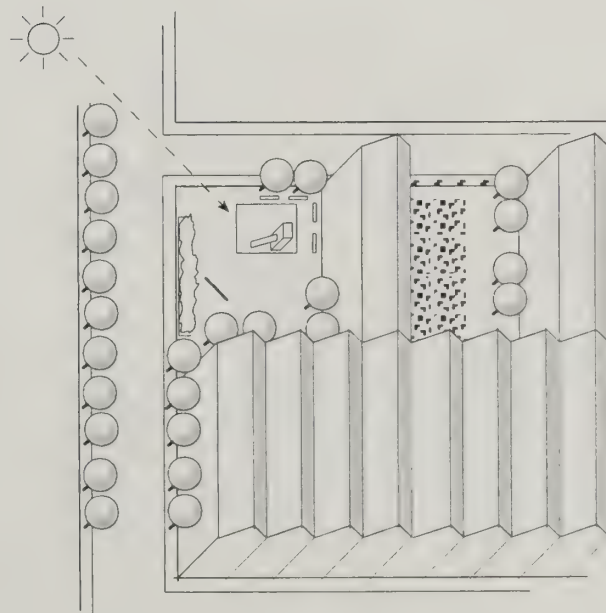


Figure 59. Suggested layout of pocket park and community garden

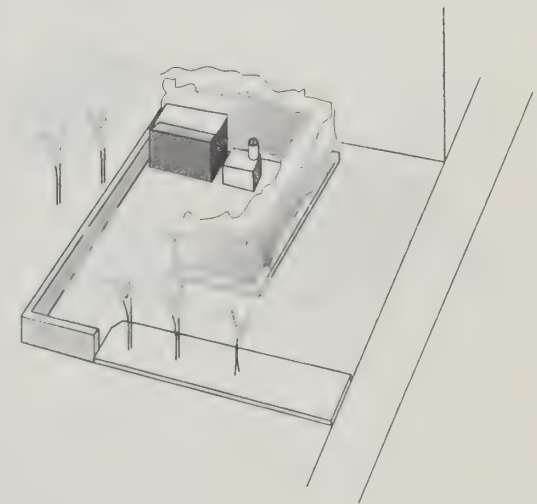


Figure 60. Screening mechanical units and garbage collection area

4.2 Residential Areas

Urban design objectives:

- Facilitate context-sensitive growth and development of the City's neighborhoods
- Regulate the diversity of architectural styles and construction

In addition to the general design criteria recommended in Section 4.1, the following design guidelines are proposed specifically for the City's residential areas:

- Reinforce neighborhood identification by incorporating elements in building facades, yard areas, and streetscape that are representative of or symbolize the neighborhood.
- Discourage off-street parking in individual lots, because it results in excessive curb cuts, which disrupt the pedestrian environment and inhibit provision of street trees.



Existing Conditions



Figure 61. Guidelines for design of infill units in residential areas

- Encourage residents to park on-street or in well designed parking lots located on the interior of blocks or at appropriate locations.
- Provide rear yard parking where feasible with provision of well-lit and secure alleyways.
- Design infill residential buildings to be consistent with the prevailing building prototype in the area, e.g., build new row houses in areas where a row house is the predominant building type.



Existing Conditions



Figure 62. Guidelines for streetscape and front yard treatment in residential areas

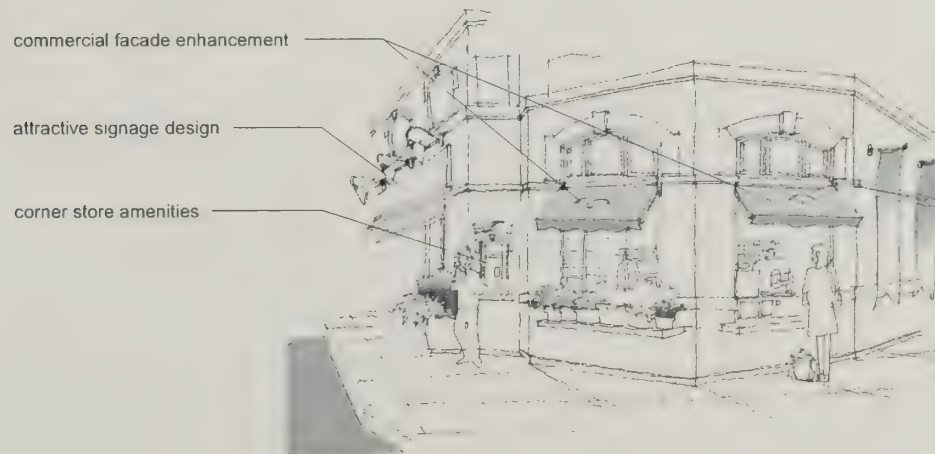


Figure 63. Guidelines for design of neighborhood serving store



Existing Conditions

4.3 Activity Districts

Urban design objectives:

- Enhance the image of activity districts to improve their economic vitality and private investment potential.
- Define unique design typology for the existing activity districts, neighborhood-oriented and city-wide.

In addition to the general design criteria recommended in Section 4.1, the following design guidelines are proposed specifically for the City's activity districts:

- Define clear boundaries for each activity district to guide future development of land and infrastructure and to focus image forming urban design enhancements within the district.
- Provide unique gateways to mark entrances into and boundaries of each district.
- Encourage commercial uses at the street level of all buildings to intensify activity and enhance the pedestrian environment. (See Figure 64)



Existing Conditions



Figure 64. Sketch illustrating streetscape enhancements within Activity Districts

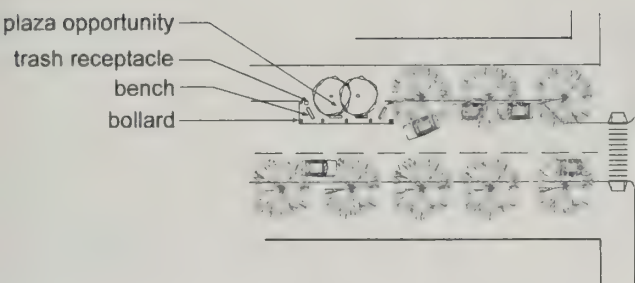


Figure 65. Plan detail of public plaza opportunities in Activity Districts

- Select unique image and identity elements for each city-wide district. Elements should include, but not be limited to, streetscape elements, way finding and directional signs, architectural fenestration, and public art.
- Highlight links between neighborhood-serving districts and the associated community through incorporation of design elements and landmarks that are symbolic of that community. (See Figure 65)
- Promote clear separation between pedestrian and vehicular traffic, providing traffic calming measures, short-term on-street parking, pedestrian-oriented lighting and clear signage.
- Improve the public environment by incorporating amenities on the street, such as canopies, small public plazas and outdoor seating for cafes.
- Avoid wide setbacks and large paved areas. Commercial developments that rely on off-street parking should provide it on rear- or side-yards to maintain consistency of the streetscape. Design of off-street parking lots should incorporate appropriate visual buffers, pedestrian amenities, and lighting.



Existing Conditions



Figure 66. Sketch illustrating urban design enhancements for neighborhood-related Activity Districts

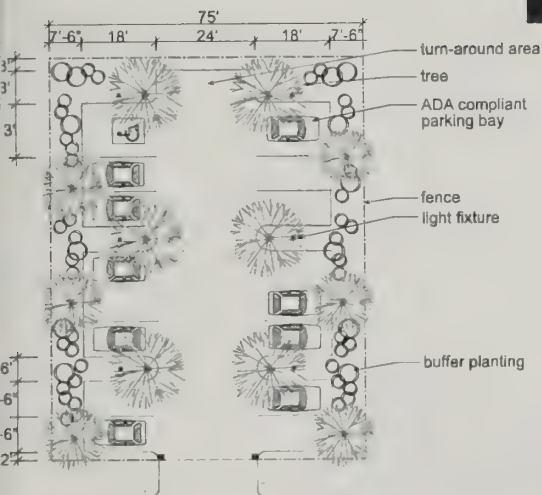


Figure 67. Parking Lot Design Standards



Existing Conditions



Existing Conditions



Figure 68. Sketch illustrating use of public art and enhancements to existing parking lots.



Figure 69. Sketch illustrating suggested parking lot enhancements in Activity Districts

4.4 Community Resources

Urban design objective:

- Promote the development of facilities that can be identified with the neighborhoods they serve to foster the sense of community ownership through design.

In addition to the general design criteria recommended in Section 4.1, the following design guidelines are proposed specifically for the City's community resources:

- Strive for creative design solutions that directly relate the facilities with their host communities. Incorporate architectural elements and other design features that are symbolic of the community within which facilities are located.
- Integrate the work of host community artists, school children and other groups in the design of such facilities. This integration has the potential to directly involve members of the community in the development and maintenance of these facilities. Works of art also lend visual excitement, and may be used to enhance blank walls or screen undesirable views.



Existing Conditions

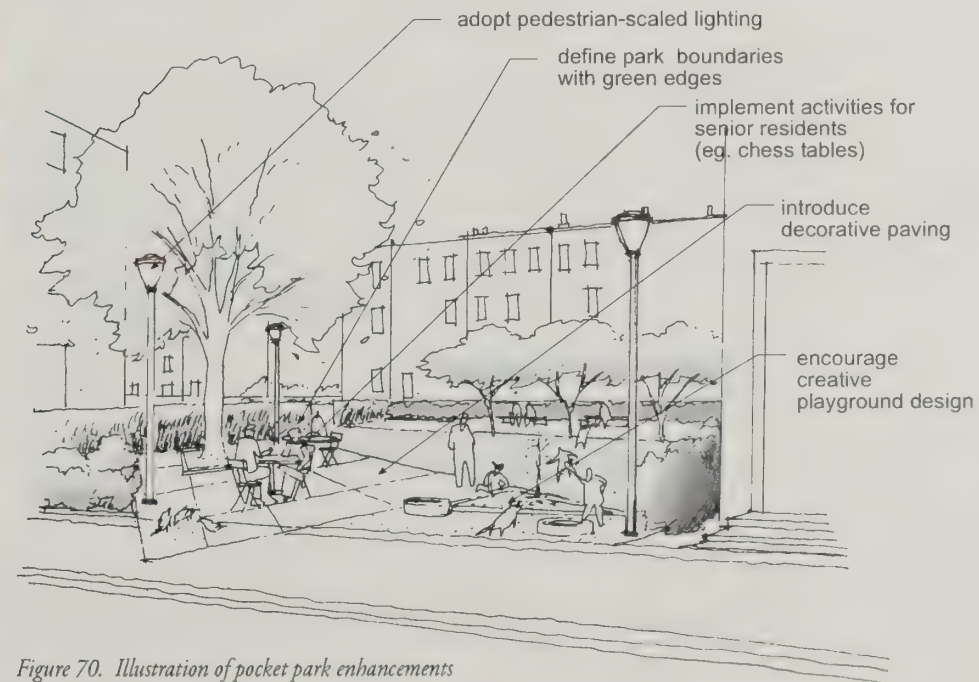


Figure 70. Illustration of pocket park enhancements

4.5 Community Access System

Urban design objectives:

- Enhance the image of Jersey City through high-quality streetscape design for all roadways within the City.
- Promote efficiency of access within the City by organizing city streets into a visually discernable hierarchy. For design purposes, all City streets should be classified into the following categories: Neighborhood Streets, Commercial Corridors, Greenways, and City Connectors.

In addition to the general design criteria recommended in Section 4.1, the following design guidelines are proposed specifically for the City's community access system:

- Develop gateway elements to highlight entrances into the City and to mark the different neighborhoods and activity districts. Include local artists, school children, and other community groups in the design of gateways.
- Implement consistent streetscape design criteria for each type of roadway within the City. Provide amenities for pedestrians on sidewalks, separation of vehicular and other traffic through pavement design elements and street trees, lighting for safety on City streets, and a system of way finding and directional signs.



Existing Conditions



Figure 71. Illustration of enhancements to existing street classified as a Neighborhood Link

- Incorporate architectural elements that are symbolic of the various City neighborhoods
- Promote clear separation between pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- Improve attractiveness and efficiency of signage systems.
- Implement system of dedicated roadways, greenways and city-connectors, for the major north-south and east-west connections in the City.
- Propose design standards for the different types of roads: local roadways, city-collectors, and greenways.

4.5.1 Neighborhood Streets:

These are all City streets that pass through the neighborhoods, providing linkages within each neighborhood and to neighborhood-serving activity districts and community resources. Although automobile access is not discouraged on these roadways, greater emphasis should be placed on the pedestrian environment.

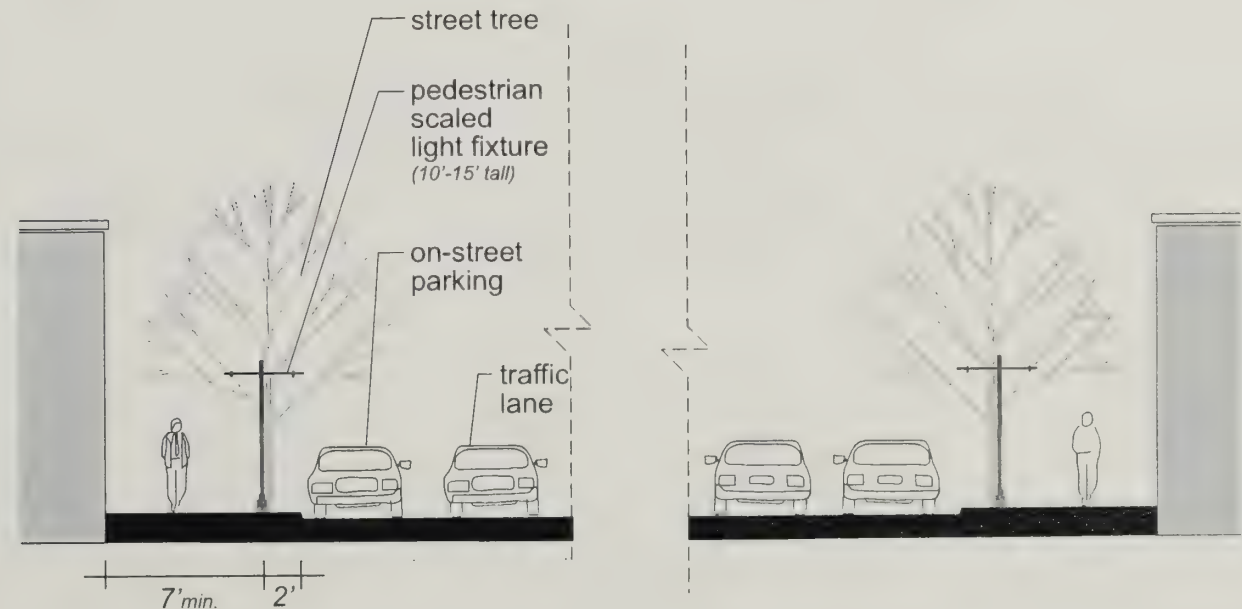


Figure 72. Conceptual cross section of street classified as a Neighborhood Street

Design Guidelines:

- Traffic calming measures, such as on-street parking, intersection bump-outs, well-marked crosswalks, etc. should be employed to shift emphasis from automobiles to pedestrians.
- Pedestrian-scale lighting should be provided to foster a greater sense of personal safety.
- Shade-giving and/or ornamental street trees should be provided on the sidewalks with provision for seasonal plantings by residents.
- Sidewalks should be well-maintained and obstruction-free, with adequate clear width and surface treatment conducive to pedestrian use (consistent with the Americans With Disabilities Act).
- Pedestrian-oriented signage should be provided to highlight destinations within a half-mile radius.

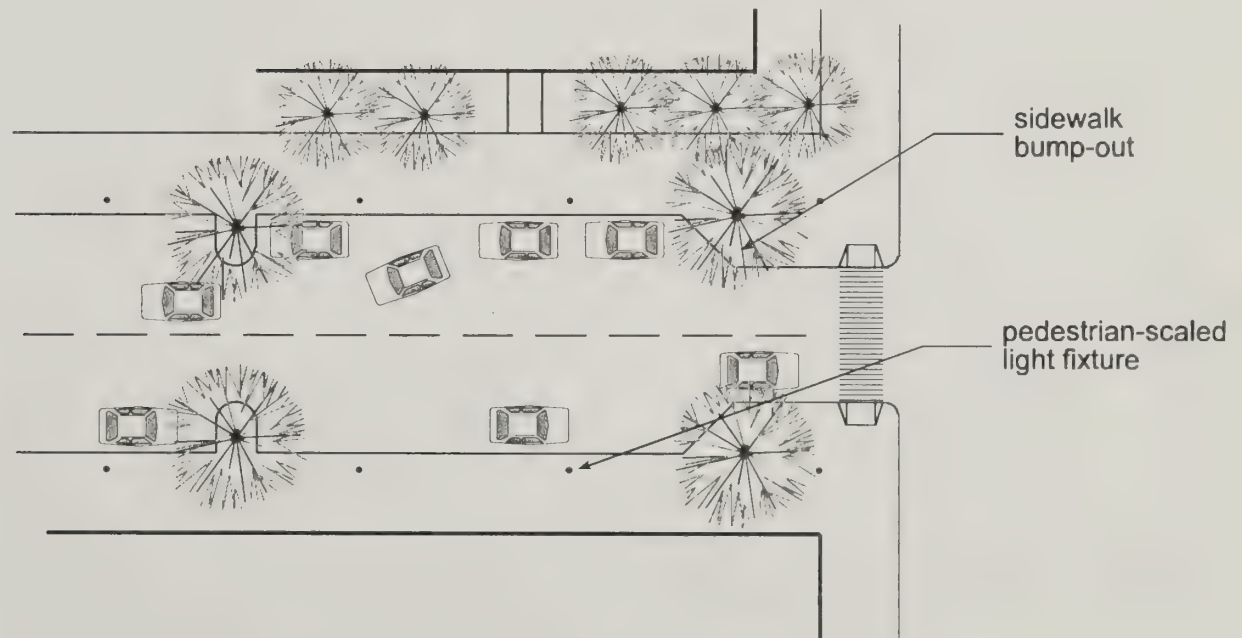


Figure 73. Conceptual plan detail of street classified as a Neighborhood Link

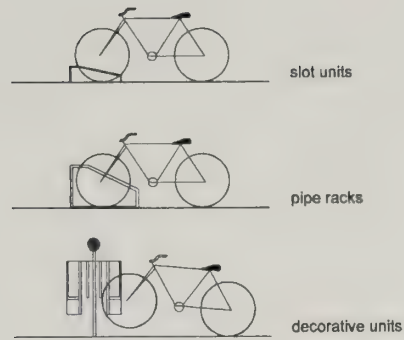


Figure 74. Bicycle Racks

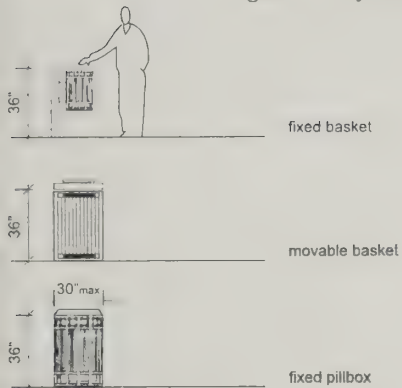


Figure 75. Trash Receptacle

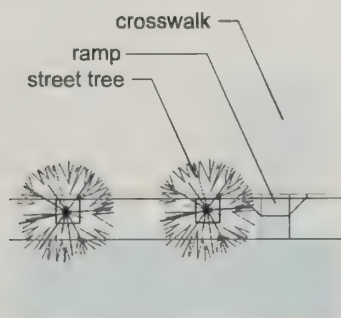


Figure 76. Crosswalk

4.5.2 Greenways

These are roadways that connect the nodes with the City's major parks, open spaces, and recreational areas. A city-wide system comprised of several interconnected roadways should be developed "opportunistically." For example, although public roadways are the preferred route, pedestrian pathways, mid-block connections, and recreational trails may be used to maintain continuity. Where adequate right-of-way is not available immediately, easements may be acquired over time.

Greenway connections in the East-West direction may connect Lincoln Park to Liberty State Park. In the North-South direction, Greenways may be used to integrate a series of public recreational areas and pocket parks with residential neighborhoods.

Design Guidelines:

- Extensive landscaping should be provided within and adjacent to the right-of-way, such as a double row of trees on both sides of the street with seasonal plantings in continuous tree-planting trenches.
- Automobiles and transit vehicles should be separated from bicycles and pedestrians to allow higher levels of safety for all modes.

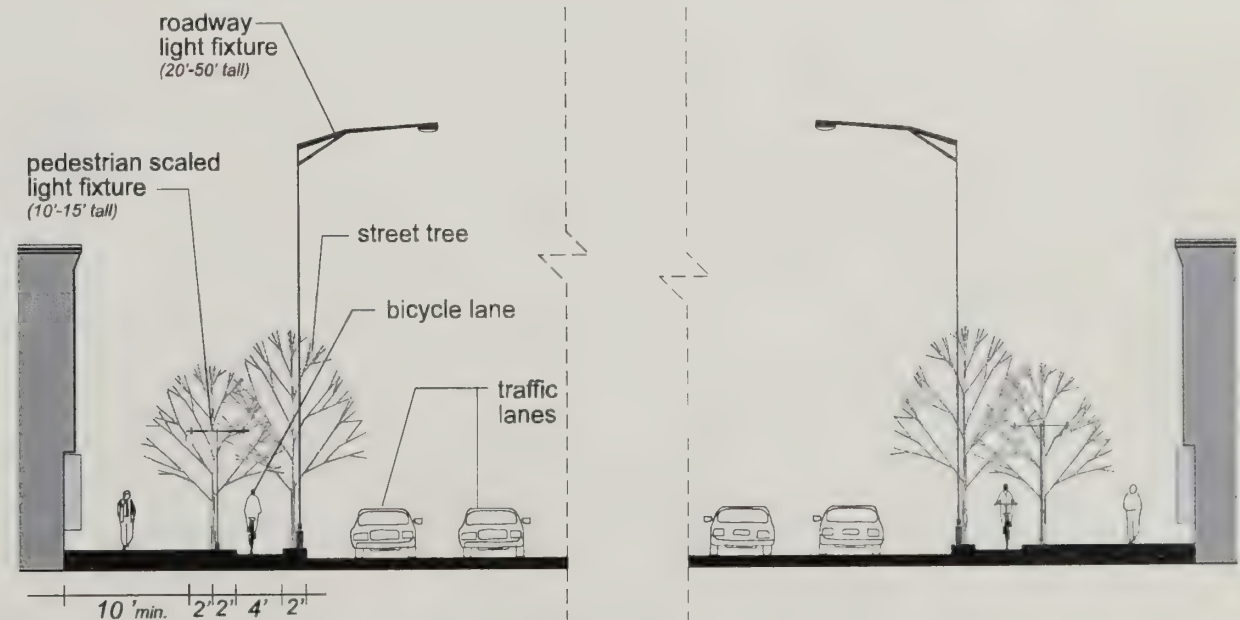


Figure 77. Conceptual cross section of street classified as a Greenway

- Bicycle paths should be separated from pedestrian sidewalks to promote and facilitate recreational bicycling.
- Imageable signage should be provided to distinguish the roadway from other area roads.
- Consistent, way-finding signage should be incorporated to facilitate identification of city-wide open space resources and network of greenways.
- Rest areas with appropriate facilities such as benches, water fountains, exercise equipment, etc. should be provided along the greenways.
- The lighting system should promote safety for users

4.5.3 City Connectors

These are roadways that link the activity districts and neighborhoods to each other. A city connector may be the entire length of a roadway but, in most instances would be limited to the length of a roadway that forms the linkage. Designation of city connectors should be made on a case-by-case basis. JFK Boulevard as the north-south city connector and Montgomery Street as the east-west roadway are suggested for preliminary design purposes.

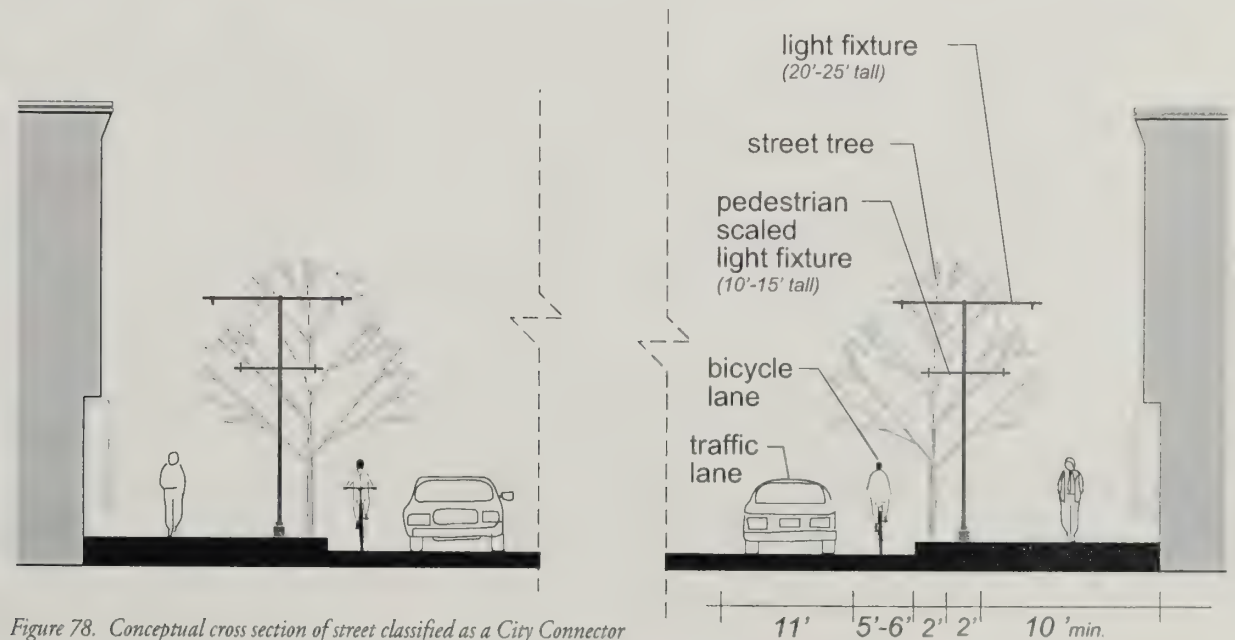


Figure 78. Conceptual cross section of street classified as a City Connector

The following elements should be incorporated in City Connectors:

- Bicycle lanes in the cartway, with clear demarcation in the pavement.
- Auto-oriented and pedestrian-scale lighting.
- Well-maintained sidewalks with street trees on both sides.
- Consistent, way-finding signage, identifying significant city destinations at both automobile and pedestrian scale.
- Mass transit stops and shelters as per the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Report 19, Guidelines for the Location and Design of Bus Stops.



Existing Conditions

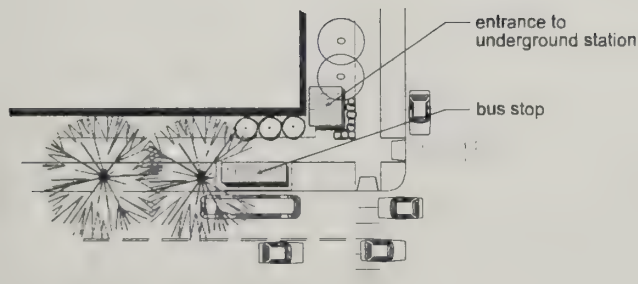


Figure 79. Conceptual plan detail of City Connector transit stop



Figure 80. Illustration of suggested mass transit stop on City Connectors

4.5.4 City Gateways

Urban Design Objective:

Defining Jersey City's edges will help to establish what is in the City and what is not. It is similar to defining neighborhood or district boundaries but at a much larger scale, creating a recognizable identity for the entire City. From an urban design point of view, Jersey City's edges and entrances should be addressed to:

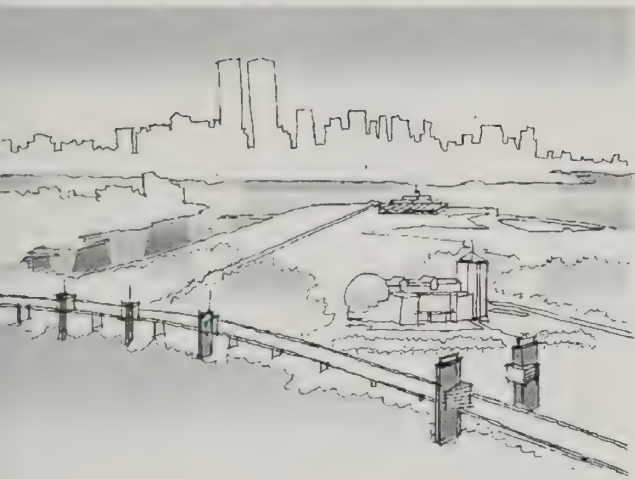
- Establish the perceived boundaries of the City for residents, visitors, and users of the regional access system.
- Enhance the image of the City by creating attractive entrances.
- Visually indicate Jersey City's key entrances to travelers.
- Mitigate undesirable edges, or divides, within the City.



Existing Conditions



Figure 81. Conceptual guidelines for design of peripheral entrances to the City



Sketch illustrating gateway enhancements at major entrances to the City



Existing Conditions

The urban design analysis documented in Section 2 has preliminarily identified the major entrances into the City. It is recommended this analysis be used to prepare a comprehensive plan for gateways to the City. The following guidelines are proposed to assist in the design of gateways to the City:

- Classify the different types of existing gateway conditions that present opportunities for enhancement. Types of gateways could include major entrances (exits leading from the regional access roadways), secondary entrances (edges of the City at City Connector roadways), and minor entrances (City boundary at other local streets).
- Major entrances should be designed to create a significant visual impact on motorists arriving into or leaving the City at relatively higher speeds. This can be achieved by the use of large-scale repetitive elements over a larger distance. The elements may incorporate public art, lighting, significant landscaping, and signage.
- Secondary entrances should be designed to create an attractive entry experience for visitors using the local roadways that have been classified as City Connectors. Elements to be used may include large-scale portal type structures, artistic lighting, landscaping, and signage.
- Minor entrances are located on local roadways that convey minor amounts of traffic. The City boundary should be demarcated on these roadways using a standardized sign providing the City's name and logo.



Figure 82. Sketch illustrating gateway enhancements at major entrances to the City

4.6 Regional Economic Engine

Urban design objective:

- Promote development of high-quality districts within Jersey City for regional economic activity that will enhance the image of Jersey City.
- Promote identification of these areas with the Jersey City community through incorporation of architectural and other design elements that are symbolic of the City's neighborhoods.

In addition to the general design criteria recommended in Section 4.1, the following design guidelines are proposed specifically for the City's regional economic engines:

- Define clear boundaries of the area where regional economic activities are to be concentrated.
- Select unique image and identity elements for each city-wide district. Elements should include, but not be limited to, streetscape elements, way finding and directional signs, architectural fenestration, and public art.
- Highlight the linkage between these areas and the City through incorporation of design elements and landmarks that are symbolic of the community as a whole.
- Require commercial uses at street level of all buildings to intensify activity and enhance the pedestrian environment.
- Promote clear separation between pedestrian and vehicular traffic, providing traffic calming measures, short-term on-street parking, pedestrian-oriented lighting and clear signage.
- Improve the public environment by incorporating amenities on the street, such as canopies, small public plazas and outdoor seating for cafes.
- Avoid wide setbacks and large paved areas. Commercial developments that rely on off-street parking should provide it on rear- or side-yards to maintain consistency of the streetscape.
- Create efficient and attractive physical linkages within the regional economic activity area to integrate and unify the area and to decrease the use of private vehicle for internal travel.



Figure 83. Model of proposed financial center at Exchange Place
(source: City of Jersey City)

4.7 National Tourist Destination

Urban design objective:

- Increase identification of national tourist destinations with Jersey City.
- Expand tourist visitation to other parts of the City.

In addition to the general design criteria recommended in Section 4.1, the following design guidelines are proposed specifically for the City's national tourist destinations:

- Define a clearly identifiable area for focused development of tourist destinations within the City by implementing a system of urban design enhancements such as gateways, streetscape and signage.
- Highlight the linkage between this area and the City through incorporation of design elements and landmarks that are symbolic of the community as a whole.
- Provide attractive linkages between the City's activity districts and the national tourist destination areas.

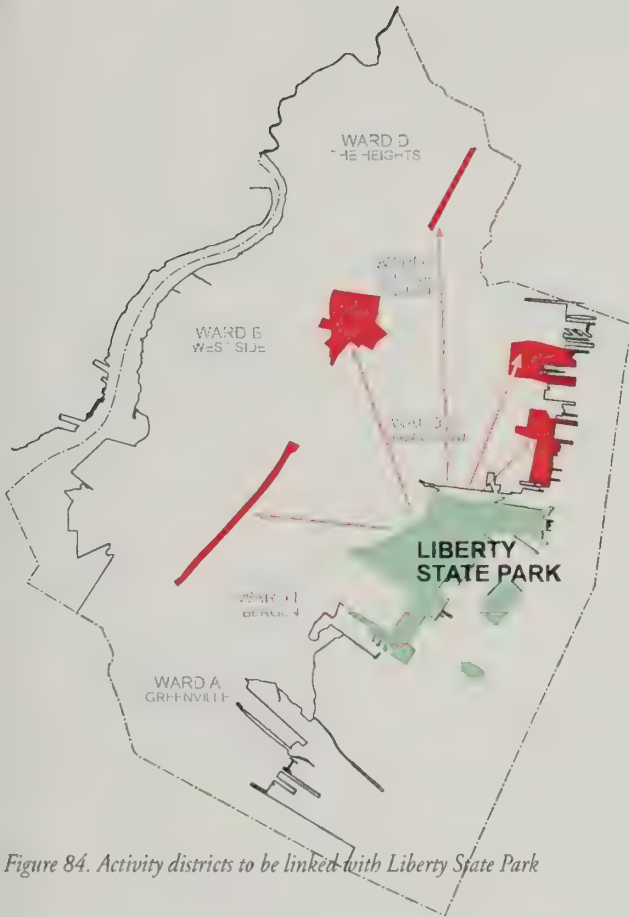


Figure 84. Activity districts to be linked with Liberty State Park



Existing Conditions

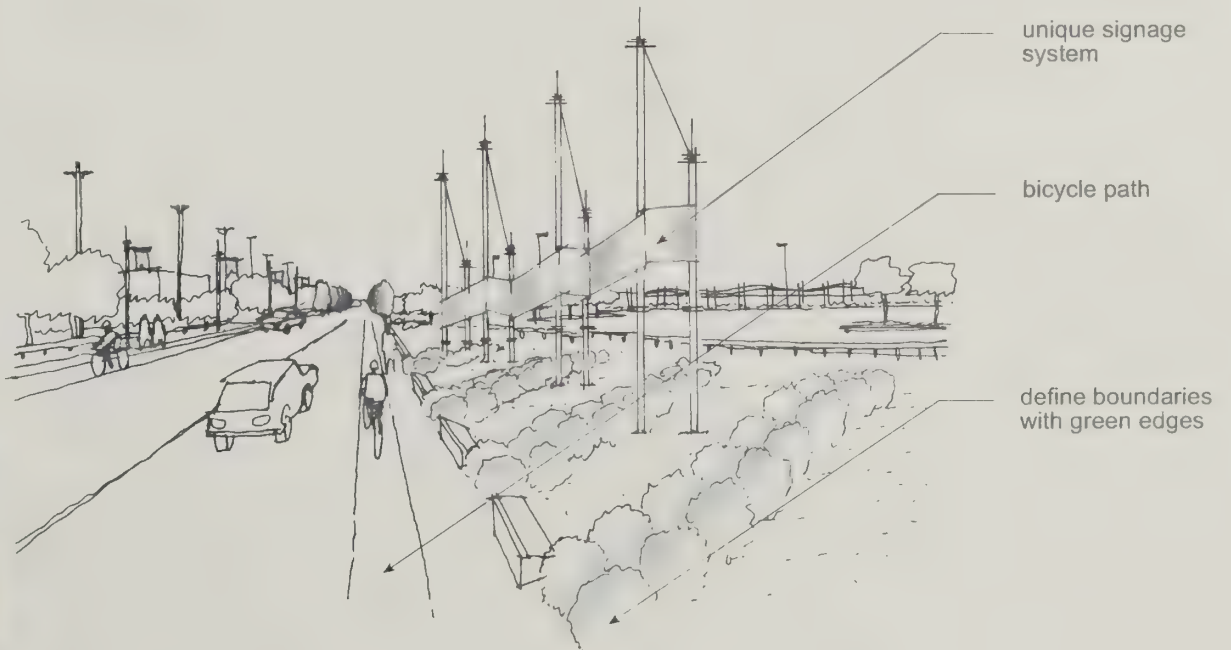


Figure 85. Conceptual guidelines for entrance to Liberty State Park

4.8 Global Node

Urban design objective:

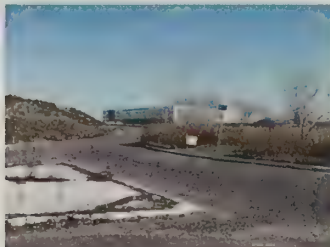
- Promote contained growth of the City's port facilities.
- Prevent adverse physical impacts of port activities in adjacent residential uses.

In addition to the general design criteria recommended in Section 4.1, the following design guidelines are proposed specifically for the City's global node:

- Implement a landscape buffer program along the edges of the existing port facilities
- Designate specific roadway and rail access routes to serve the port to avoid conflicts with inner-city traffic and pedestrian circulation.
- Require landscape buffers along existing and proposed designated port access routes to and from the port.
- The lighting system along the inner-boundaries of the port should be designed to minimize glare in adjacent areas, however it should guarantee the safety of residents circulating in the area.



Figure 86. Conceptual map showing global node location and buffer



Existing Conditions

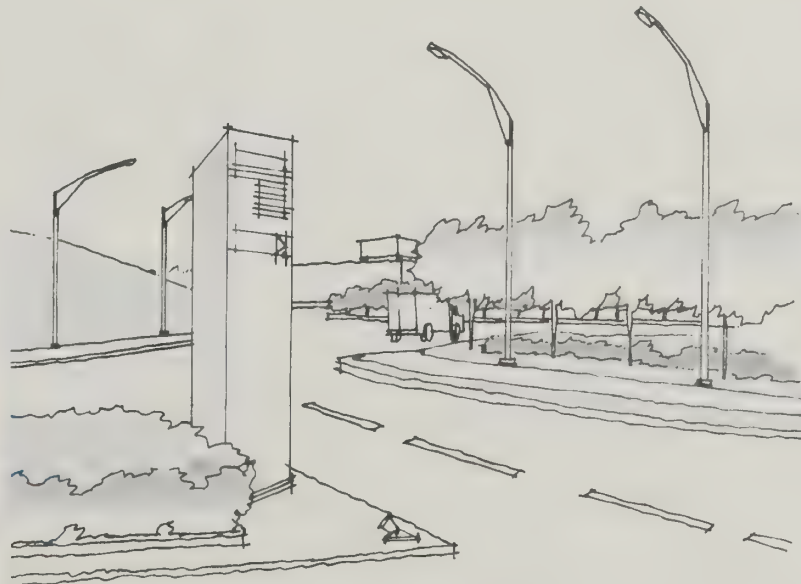


Figure 87. Conceptual sketch illustrating Greenville Yards edges and entrances enhancement (at Access Road)

Master Plan Implementation Initiatives



Figure 88. Rendering of the development vision for Exchange Place - currently under implementation (source: City of Jersey City)



Figure 89. Images from community celebrations in Jersey City's diverse neighborhoods (source: City of Jersey City)

As an element of the Master Plan for the City, the guidelines recommended in this Handbook provide general direction to public and private entities engaged in the future design and development of the City of Jersey City. The Design Guidelines serve as an overlay on the City's existing regulatory framework and are intended to:

- Improve the quality of development, thereby enhancing the potential of all areas of Jersey City and consequently the economic vitality of the City;
- Create coherent, linked sequences of urban spaces, thereby improving both pedestrian and vehicular experiences of the City;
- Capitalize on the City's existing strengths to establish an improved image for Jersey City, thereby strongly asserting its position among other cities in the region.

Implementation of the Master Plan is intended to be a joint effort by both the public and private sectors that have a stake in the future of the Jersey City. In this process of implementation, the role of the public sector is to initiate and direct change through policy initiatives and improvement of City's development infrastructure – its roadways, transit systems, utility systems and shared community resources. The private sector is the development partner of the City in this process, providing the vision and leadership to realize physical changes through development and redevelopment of parcels in the City.

When applied to specific infrastructure or private development projects, the urban design guidelines will guide preparation of detailed urban design plans for specific infrastructure or development projects. The urban design plans would include or be followed by an additional level of design detail that is needed in order to execute specific projects. For example, specific decisions such as the selection of lighting fixtures, paving materials, and plant materials as well as architectural design decisions will need to be made. These detailed design decisions should be consistent with and reinforce the concepts of the Urban Design Handbook and should be related to adjacent projects and components of the urban scene.

Strategic Action Plan

The vision for Jersey City's future that has guided the preparation of this Master Plan includes a strategic action plan to assist the City in initiating the implementation process. This action plan is comprised of a series of initiatives that will direct the steps required to implement the various elements of the Master Plan. This Section, which is the Strategic Implementation element of the Master Plan, describes the major initiatives recommended.

5.1 Revised Zoning

Jersey City's zoning ordinance is the central document shaping how the City grows and evolves. At this point in the City's history, zoning is a fundamentally important tool to shape the kind of city its residents want to have. This is because the City is already built out to its edges, with all of its critical infrastructure systems and land use patterns in place. The City changes, not in sweeping ways, but incrementally, as a result of the reuse and redevelopment of individual properties. The zoning code is the main method of managing and channeling that redevelopment.

The City's existing zoning code, adopted in 1974, contains provisions that, in many instances, promote an architectural vision that does not correspond with the City's historic urban fabric. Its provisions do not allow the City to promote sensitive reuse of the City's existing resources nor promote community sensitive use of land, except through creation of redevelopment areas.

The vision of Jersey City residents that is embodied in this master plan can only be realized if the City undertakes a complete rewrite of the Zoning Ordinance. The following principles are recommended to guide the process of preparing the new Ordinance:

- Zoning should recognize and protect the diversity of the City's existing and historic urban design.
- Zoning should result in development that preserves and enhances the quality of life of residents.
- Zoning should be comprehensive and unambiguous; its provisions must be easy to use by designers of property and infrastructure and enforced by the City.
- Zoning should be flexible enough to accommodate the future quality of life needs of its dynamic population and the needs of its expanding economy.



Figure 90. Redevelopment vision for the M.L.K. Drive Hub

The following specific issues related to the current ordinance have been identified for special consideration in the new ordinance:

- Distribution of land uses
- Density and bulk control
- Parking location
- Building setbacks
- Building scale
- Facade treatment
- Streetscape, landscape and site plan requirements
- Service access
- Design standards

5.2 Design Review

Architectural diversity is one of the most attractive features of the City. Urban design analysis conducted as part of the master planning process has revealed coexistence of a large number of architectural styles and façade conditions throughout the City. It is also understood that no single set of design guidelines or zoning controls can control infill development to the extent needed to achieve compatibility among adjacent properties throughout the City. Efforts to subdivide the City into architecturally cohesive zones further underscored this conclusion. The result of this approach would be an excessive fragmentation of the City.

A design review process is therefore recommended to be legislated and codified in the City's zoning ordinance. It is envisioned that the City would constitute a Design Review Board that would be charged with assisting designers and developers to creatively design infill buildings that are sensitive to the urban context of the City's activity districts and neighborhoods. Such bodies are commonly used in cities throughout the United States and abroad for this purpose. Under this system, developers of projects would be required to submit their proposals to the Board, which would, after due consultation with the owner/designer, make design recommendations for consideration by the Zoning Board and Planning Board during their approval process.



Figure 91. Urban design concept for Mc Ginley Square



Figure 92. Rendering of proposed improvements in Journal Square

Important issues that should be addressed during such a design review process are:

- Architectural compatibility
- Visual impact on adjacent environment
- Open space quality

5.3 Street Investment

The physical space of Jersey City, similar to most mature cities, is composed of an agglomeration of mostly occupied development parcels ordered by a network of streets and underground utilities. The overall image and economic development potential of the City are shaped by the physical appearance of the streets and adjacent development parcels. Analysis conducted during the master planning process has indicated an overwhelming need to make investments in the City's streets to enhance both the City's image and its economic development potential.

In developing a street investment plan, the City should consider all aspects of the street right-of-way, including the following attributes:

City Streets

- Access characteristics (auto, bus, rail, and bicycle)
- Pedestrian amenities
- Visual impact
- Lighting (pedestrian and roadway)
- Signage (way-finding and directional)

Regional Roadways

- Gateways
- Visual impact
- City access characteristics

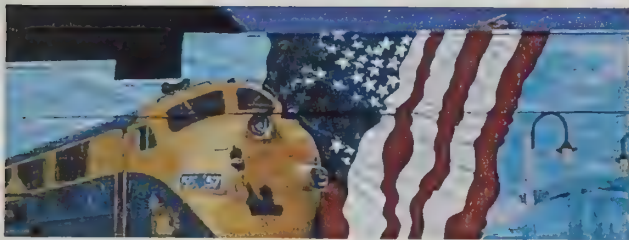


Figure 93. Mural Jersey City (source: City of Jersey City)



Figure 94. Art on the waterfront



Figure 95. Art on the waterfront



Figure 96. Mural Jersey City
(source: City of Jersey City)

5.4 Public Art

The City environment offers many opportunities for integration of public art in the everyday life of residents and visitors. Such integration may yield the following benefits:

Community Identification: Public art has the potential to involve members of the community in the design of public facilities, thereby fostering a sense of community ownership, which has been known to reduce the risk of vandalism. Public art projects may also be used to strengthen cultural identification with the public environment through use of icons and imagery that is symbolic of the community.

Community Revitalization: Public art installations can improve the general appearance of the physical environment through installations in streets, parks, and other public places.

Community Development: Involvement of artists in communities has been known to have a significant impact on the economic vitality of deteriorated or redeveloping areas. Work and live districts, such as WALDO in Jersey City, can assist in initiating land use changes in areas where the existing use is no longer viable.

Recognizing the tremendous contribution that public art can make on the quality of life in a metropolitan area, it is recommended that the City establish a public art program to promote incorporation of community artworks in major developments in the City. The goal of the program would be to encourage high quality design of the public realm through involvement of artists in the design process. A specially constituted public body, whose purpose would be to establish an arts policy and to identify opportunities for art throughout the City, should oversee the program.

To maximize the benefit of these opportunities, the following actions are recommended to guide implementation of this program:

- Identify specific opportunities for initial artist involvement in the planning stages of infrastructure and development projects.
- Establish a selection process to attract artists of repute while simultaneously encouraging the involvement of local artists and emerging talent.
- Involve artists as part of the design team, building the perspective of the artist into the project from design through construction.
- Integrate art in building elements rather than as freestanding elements, i.e. develop artworks or enhanced architectural elements that would be designed and constructed along with the rest of the project.

WALDO (Work and Live District Ordinance) is a Downtown area formerly zoned for industrial use that has been rezoned to allow artists to live and work there, provided the buildings are brought up to code. WALDO also allows the development of art-related business, such as art supply stores and galleries.

The image of WALDO's eight warehouse blocks should be developed to reinforce the desired vanguard identity. The streetscape should be designed to favor the pedestrian, provide adequate parking for visitors, and encourage compatible service entrances and loading areas.



Existing Conditions



Figure 97. WALDO enhancement guidelines

- Encourage research and thought about the history and nature of the site to develop images and designs which best express the background and character of those places.
- Create links between public facilities and host neighborhoods.

5.5 Incentive / Support Programs

The public participation process conducted during the preparation of the Master Plan revealed several changes required in the City to attain the quality of life desired by residents. Many of these changes are physical in nature and have been addressed in the land use and urban design elements. Several changes recommended in the other elements of the Master Plan are not physical in nature, but are related to socio-economic processes. Such processes may be influenced through incentive and support programs that are designed to induce the desired changes without large-scale renewal or massive financial commitment by the public sector.

Incentive/Support programs are recommended to induce the following changes recommended in the Master Plan:

- Increase of homeownership opportunities
- Expansion of the availability of low- and moderate-income housing
- Increase of opportunities for the development of senior housing
- Expansion of neighborhood-oriented commercial uses
- Creation of incentives for the reuse of vacant structures and lots
- Promotion of historic preservation and rehabilitation
- Continuation with the facade rehabilitation program
- Expansion of the job market in Jersey City



Figure 98. Images from community celebrations in Jersey City's diverse neighborhoods (Source: City of Jersey City)

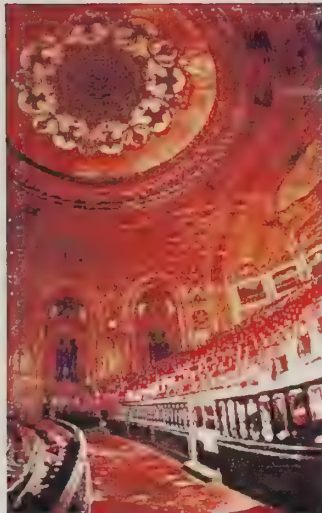


Figure 99. Loews Theatre
(source: City of Jersey City)

5.6 Facilities Investment

The Master Plan, while recognizing the availability of several high quality public facilities for residents in the City, has recommended enhancement of key facilities that have been determined to be inadequate to sustain desired quality of life levels. The availability and quality of these facilities has a direct impact on the quality of life of residents. While the City may not be responsible for ultimately financing or implementing the recommended changes, it is recommended that the City should lead the process of initiating the change and planning the changes to realize maximum benefit for its residents. The changes recommended are:

- Improved access to quality public education for Jersey City residents.
- Provision of community centers and day-care facilities within easy walking distance of neighborhoods (1/4 to 1/2 mile radius).
- Construction of pocket parks within walking distance of all residential areas.
- Upgrade of utilities and other infrastructure to fuel the city's growing economy.
- Increased safety in public spaces through greater police presence and emphasis on design of naturally defensible spaces.

5.7 Parking Regulation

A Parking Study has been prepared in conjunction with the Master Plan. The objective of this study is to implement the goals of the Master Plan by improving existing parking operations and planning for the future growth of the City. In specific, the parking study addresses the following objectives:

- Determine parking demand ratios for new residential development.
- Increase availability of on-street parking spaces for residents.
- Determine parking ratios for new commercial development.
- Identify parking demand in commercial districts and locations of shortfall/surplus.
- Increase availability of parking in commercial districts.
- Propose methods of reducing parking demand in commercial areas.

Implementation recommendations are included in the Parking Study report.

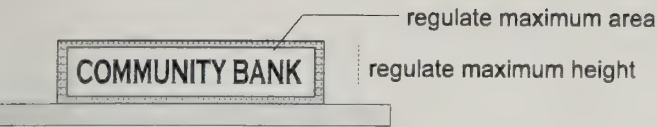


Figure 100. Free Standing Sign - Ground Sign

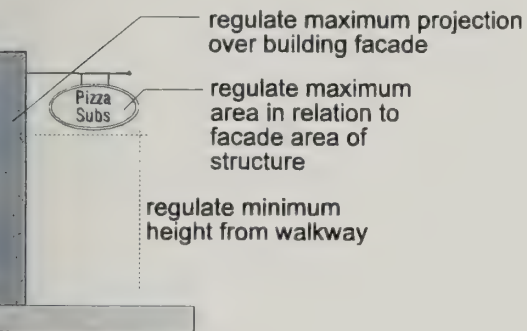


Figure 101. Projecting Sign

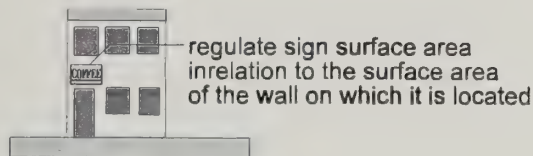


Figure 102. Wall Sign

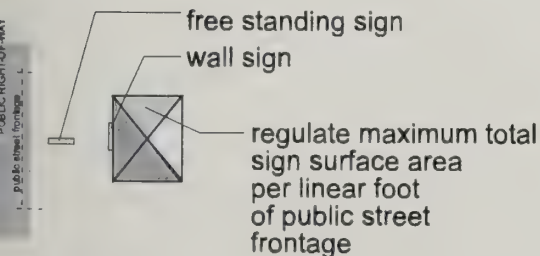


Figure 103. Sign Surface Calculation

5.8 Signage

Along with buildings and landscape, signage is an important component of the urban design of all cities. Signs help residents, workers and visitors to find their way and they help local merchants conduct their business. Jersey City is no exception and a multitude of signs may be found on the City's buildings and streets.

Urban design analysis conducted as part of the Master Planning process has revealed need for a comprehensive and coordinated City-wide signage system. Each successive generation has installed signs that were relevant to their needs of the moment and without the benefit of coordination. The result of this layering can be seen in many parts of Jersey City today.

It is recommended that the City prepare a comprehensive blueprint for the various types of signs that may be permitted and provide design guidelines to ensure a harmonious visual experience throughout the City. The following types of signs must be addressed in the signage blueprint:

Commercial Signs:

- Storefront (used to advertise name of the business and display merchandise)
- Billboards (used for general commercial communication along major roadways and within major activity areas such as Journal Square, may be static or multimedia)
- District Identifiers (used to delineate boundaries of activity areas and neighborhoods, most commonly banners)

Directional Signs:

- Traffic (used to guide vehicular traffic and prevent unsafe conflicts between the various modes of transportation)
- Way-Finding (used to guide residents and visitors to the various parts of the City and to highlight significant public attractions and activity centers)
- Historic (used to highlight the City's historic heritage)
- Street Names
- Gateways (used to identify City boundaries from major roadways passing through the City)

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